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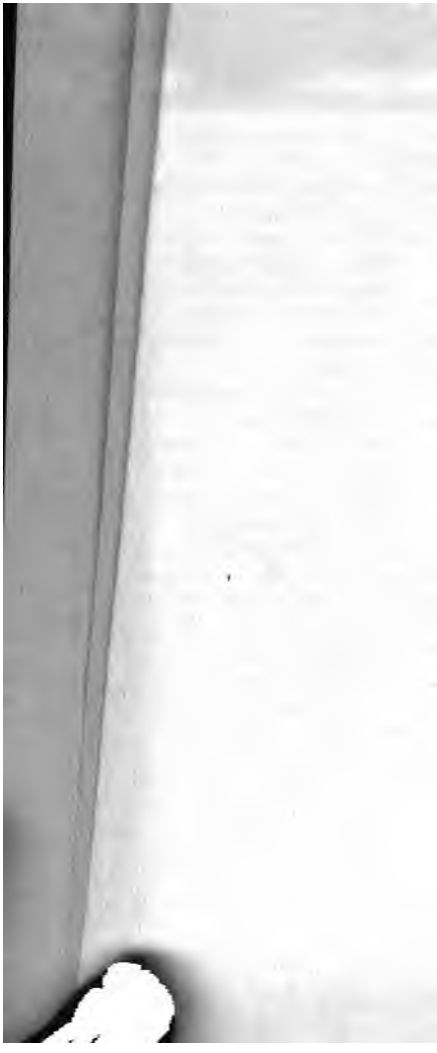

Thomas THE Scott

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

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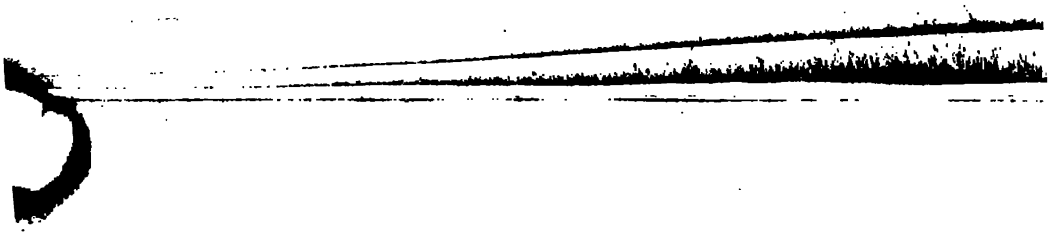
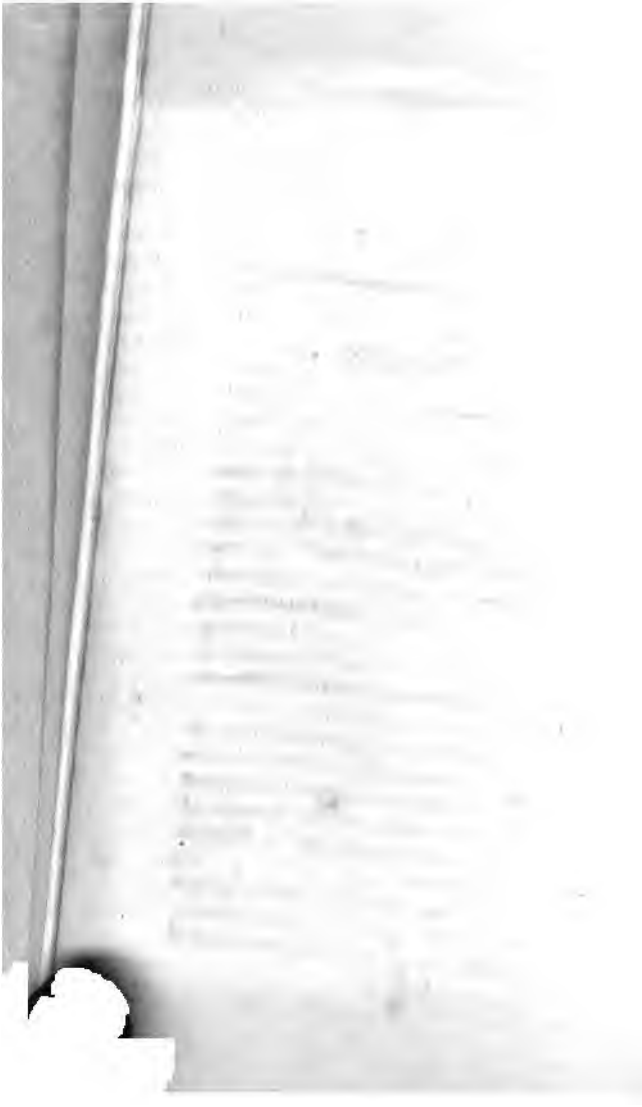


POLITICAL TRACTS.

Fallitur, egregio quisquis sub principe credit
Servitium, nunquam Libertas gratior extat
Quam sub Rege pio.

CLAUDIANUS.



THE

FALSE ALARM.

[1770.]

ONE of the chief advantages derived by the present generation from the improvement and diffusion of philosophy, is deliverance from unnecessary terrors, and exemption from false alarms. The unusual appearances, whether regular or accidental, which once spread consternation over ages of ignorance, are now the recreations of inquisitive security. The sun is no more lamented when it is eclipsed, than when it sets; and meteors play their coruscations without prognostick or prediction.

The advancement of political knowledge may be expected to produce in time the like effects. Causeless discontent and seditious violence will grow less frequent, and less formidable, as the science of government is better ascertained, by a diligent study of the theory of man.

It is not indeed to be expected, that physical and political truth should meet with equal acceptance, or gain ground upon the world with equal

facility. The notions of the naturalist find / kind in a state of neutrality, or at worst have thing to encounter but prejudice and vanity; judice without malignity, and vanity without ill est. But the politician's improvements are posed by every passion that can exclude con tion or suppress it; by ambition, by avarice, hope, and by terror, by publick faction, and vate animosity.

It is evident, whatever be the cause, that t nation, with all its renown for speculation and learning, has yet made little proficiency in ci wisdom. We are still so much unacquainted wi our own state, and so unskilful in the pursuit happiness, that we shudder without danger, cor plain without grievances, and suffer our quiet to be disturbed, and our commerce to be interrupted, by an opposition to the government, raised only by interest, and supported only by clamour, which yet has so far prevailed upon ignorance and timidity, that many favour it as reasonable, and many dread it as powerful.

What is urged by those who have been so industrious to spread suspicion, and incite fury from one end of the kingdom to the other, may be known by perusing the papers which have been at once presented as petitions to the king, and exhibited in print as remonstrances to the people. It may therefore not be improper to lay before the Publick the reflections of a man who cannot favour the opposition, for he thinks it wicked, and cannot fear it, for he thinks it weak.

The grievance which has produced all this tempest of outrage, the oppression in which all other

oppressions are included, the invasion which has left us no property, the alarm that suffers no patriot to sleep in quiet, is comprised in a vote of the House of Commons, by which the freeholders of Middlesex are deprived of a Briton's birthright, representation in parliament.

They have indeed received the usual writ of election, but that writ, alas! was malicious mockery; they were insulted with the form, but denied the reality, for there was one man excepted from their choice.

Non de vi, neque cæde, nec veneno,
Sed lis est mihi de tribus capellis.

The character of the man thus fatally excepted, I have no purpose to delineate. Lampoon itself would disdain to speak ill of him of whom no man speaks well. It is sufficient that he is expelled the House of Commons, and confined in jail as being legally convicted of sedition and impiety.

That this man cannot be appointed one of the guardians and counsellors of the church and state, is a grievance not to be endured. Every lover of liberty stands doubtful of the fate of posterity, because the chief county in England cannot take its representative from a jail.

Whence Middlesex should obtain the right of being denominated the chief county, cannot easily be discovered; it is indeed the county where the chief city happens to stand, but how that city treated the favourite of Middlesex, is not yet forgotten. The county, as distinguished from the city has no claim to particular consideration.

That a man was in jail for sedition and impiety, would, I believe, have been within memory a sufficient reason why he should not come out of jail a legislator. This reason, notwithstanding the mutability of fashion, happens still to operate on the House of Commons. Their notions, however strange, may be justified by a common observation, that few are mended by imprisonment, and that he whose crimes have made confinement necessary, seldom makes any other use of his enlargement, than to do with greater cunning what he did before with less.

But the people have been told with great confidence, that the House cannot control the right of constituting representatives; that he who can persuade lawful electors to choose him, whatever be his character, is lawfully chosen, and has a claim to a seat in parliament, from which no human authority can depose him.

Here, however, the patrons of opposition are in some perplexity. They are forced to confess, that by a train of precedents sufficient to establish a custom of parliament, the House of Commons has jurisdiction over its own members; that the whole has power over individuals; and that this power has been exercised sometimes in imprisonment, and often in expulsion.

That such power should reside in the House of Commons in some cases, is inevitably necessary, since it is required by every polity, that where there is a possibility of offence, there should be a possibility of punishment. A member of the House cannot be cited for his conduct in parliament before any other court; and therefore,

if the House cannot punish him, he may attack with impunity the rights of the people, and the title of the king.

This exemption from the authority of other courts was, I think, first established in favour of the five members in the long parliament. It is not to be considered as an usurpation, for it is implied in the principles of government. If legislative powers are not co-ordinate, they cease in part to be legislative; and if they be co-ordinate, they are unaccountable; for to whom must that power account, which has no superior?

The House of Commons is indeed dissoluble by the king, as the nation has of late been very clamorously told; but while it subsists it is co-ordinate with the other powers, and this co-ordination ceases only when the House by dissolution ceases to subsist.

As the particular representatives of the people are in their publick character above the control of the courts of law, they must be subject to the jurisdiction of the House; and as the House, in the exercise of its authority, can be neither directed nor restrained, its own resolutions must be its laws, at least, if there is no antecedent decision of the whole legislature.

This privilege, not confirmed by any written law or positive compact, but by the resistless power of political necessity, they have exercised, probably from their first institution, but certainly, as their records inform us, from the 23d of Elizabeth, when they expelled a member for derogating from their privileges.

It may perhaps be doubted, whether it was originally necessary, that this right of control and punishment, should extend beyond offences in the exercise of parliamentary duty, since all other crimes are cognizable by other courts. But they, who are the only judges of their own rights, have exerted the power of expulsion on other occasions, and when wickedness arrived at a certain magnitude, have considered an offence againt society as an offence against the House.

They have therefore divested notorious delinquents of their legislative character, and delivered them up to shame or punishment, naked and unprotected, that they might not contaminate the dignity of parliament.

It is allowed that a man attainted of felony cannot sit in Parliament, and the Commons probably judged, that not being bound to the forms of law, they might treat these as felons, whose crimes were in their opinion equivalent to felony; and that as a known felon could not be chosen, a man so like a felon, that he could not easily be distinguished, ought to be expelled.

The first laws had no law to enforce them, the first authority was constituted by itself. The power exercised by the House of Commons is of this kind, a power rooted in the principles of government, and branched out by occasional practice a power which necessity made just, and precedent have made legal.

It will occur that authority thus uncontrolal may, in times of heat and contest, be oppressiv and injuriously exerted, and that he who suffers

justice, is without redress, however innocent, however miserable.

The position is true, but the argument is useless. The Commons must be controlled, or be exempt from control. If they are exempt they may do injury which cannot be redressed, if they are controlled they are no longer legislative.

If the possibility of abuse be an argument against authority, no authority ever can be established; if the actual abuse destroys its legality, there is no legal government now in the world.

This power, which the Commons have so long exercised, they ventured to use once more against Mr Wilkes, and on the 3d of February, 1769, expelled him the House, *for having printed and published a seditious libel, and three obscene and impious libels.*

If these imputations were just, the expulsion was surely seasonable; and that they were just, the House had reason to determine, as he had confessed himself, at the bar, the author of the libel which they term seditious, and was convicted in the King's Bench of both the publications.

But the freeholders of Middlesex were of another opinion. They either thought him innocent, or were not offended by his guilt. When a writ was issued for the election of a knight for Middlesex, in the room of John Wilkes, Esq; expelled the House, his friends on the sixteenth of February chose him again.

On the 17th, it was resolved, *that* John Wilkes, Esq; *having been in this session of parliament expelled the House, was, and is, incapable of being elected a member to serve in this present parliament.*

As there was no other candidate, it was resolved, at the same time, that the election of the sixteenth was a void election,

The freeholders still continued to think that no other man was fit to represent them, and on the sixteenth of March elected him once more. Their resolution was now so well known, that no opponent ventured to appear.

The Commons began to find, that power without materials for operation can produce no effect. They might make the election void for ever, but if no other candidate could be found, their determination could only be negative. They, however, made void the last election, and ordered a new writ.

On the thirteenth of April was a new election, at which Mr Lutterel, and others, offered themselves candidates. Every method of intimidation was used, and some acts of violence were done to hinder Mr Lutterel from appearing. He was not deterred, and the poll was taken, which exhibited, for

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The Sheriff returned Mr Wilkes; but the House, on April the fifteenth, determined that Mr Lutterel was lawfully elected.

From this day begun the clamour which has continued till now. Those who had undertaken to oppose the ministry, having no grievance of greater magnitude, endeavoured to swell this decision into bulk, and distort it into deformity, and then held it out to terrify the nation.

Every artifice of sedition has been since practised to awaken discontent and inflame indignation. The papers of every day have been filled with exhortations and menaces of faction. The madness has spread through all ranks and through both sexes; women and children have clamoured for Mr Wilkes, honest simplicity has been cheated into fury, and only the wise have escaped infection.

The greater part may justly be suspected of not believing their own position, and with them it is not necessary to dispute. They cannot be convinced who are convinced already, and it is well known that they will not be ashamed.

The decision, however, by which the smaller number of votes was preferred to the greater, has perplexed the minds of some, whose opinions it were indecent to despise, and who, by their integrity, well deserve to have their doubts appeased.

Every diffuse and complicated question may be examined by different methods, upon different principles; and that truth, which is easily found by one investigator, may be missed by another, equally honest and equally diligent.

Those who inquire, whether a smaller number of legal votes can elect a representative in opposition to a greater, must receive from every tongue the same answer.

The question, therefore, must be, whether a smaller number of legal votes shall not prevail against a greater number of votes not legal?

It must be considered, that those votes only are legal which are legally given, and that those only are legally given, which are given for a legal candidate.

It remains then to be discussed, whether a man expelled can be so disqualified by a vote of the House, as that he shall be no longer eligible by lawful electors?

Here we must again recur, not to positive institutions, but to the unwritten law of social nature, to the great and pregnant principle of political necessity. All government supposes subjects, all authority implies obedience. To suppose in one the right to command what another has the right to refuse, is absurd and contradictory. A state so constituted must rest for ever in motionless equipoise, with equal attractions of contrary tendency, with equal weights of power balancing each other.

Laws which cannot be enforced, can neither prevent nor rectify disorders. A sentence which cannot be executed can have no power to warn or to reform. If the Commons have only the power of dismissing for a few days the man whom his constituents can immediately send back, if they can expel but cannot exclude, they have nothing more than nominal authority, to which perhaps obedience never may be paid.

The representatives of our ancestors had an opinion very different: they fined and imprisoned their members; on great provocation they disabled them for ever; and this power of pronouncing perpetual disability is maintained by Selden himself.

These claims seem to have been made and allowed, when the constitution of our government had not yet been sufficiently studied. Such powers are not legal, because they are not necessary; and of that power which only necessity justifies, more is to be admitted than necessity obtrudes

The Commons cannot make laws, they can only pass resolutions, which, like all resolutions, are of force only to those that make them, and to those only while they are willing to observe them.

The vote of the House of Commons has therefore only so far the force of a law, as that force is necessary to preserve the vote from losing its efficacy, it must begin by operating upon themselves, and extends its influence to others, only by consequences arising from the first intention. He that starts game on his own manor, may pursue it into another.

They can properly make laws only for themselves: a member, while he keeps his seat, is subject to these laws; but when he is expelled, the jurisdiction ceases, for he is now no longer within their dominion.

The disability, which a vote can superinduce to expulsion, is no more than was included in expulsion itself; it is only a declaration of the Commons, that they will permit no longer him whom they thus censure to sit with them in parliament; a declaration made by that right which they necessarily possess, of regulating their own House, and of inflicting punishment on their own delinquents.

They have, therefore, no other way to enforce the sentence of incapacity, than that of adhering to it. They cannot otherwise punish the candidate so disqualified for offering himself, nor the electors for accepting him. But if he has any competitor, that competitor must prevail, and if he has none, his election will be void; for the right of the House to reject, annihilates with regard to the man so rejected the right of electing.

It has been urged, that the power of the House terminates with their session; since a prisoner committed by the Speaker's warrant cannot be detained during the recess. That power, indeed, ceases with the session, which must operate by the agency of others, because, when they do not sit, they can employ no agent, having no longer any legal existence; but that which is exercised on themselves revives at their meeting, when the subject of that power still subsists. They can in the next session refuse to re-admit him, whom in the former session they expelled.

That expulsion inferred exclusion in the present case, must be, I think, easily admitted. The expulsion and the writ issued for a new election were in the same session, and since the House is, by the rule of parliament, bound for the session by a vote once passed, the expelled member cannot be admitted. He that cannot be admitted, cannot be elected; and the votes given to a man ineligible being given in vain, the highest number for an eligible candidate becomes a majority.

To these conclusions, as to most moral, and to all political positions, many objections may be made. The perpetual subject of political disquisition is not absolute, but comparative good. Of two systems of government, or two laws relating to the same subject, neither will ever be such as theoretical nicety would desire, and therefore neither can easily force its way against prejudice and obstinacy; each will have its excellencies and defects, and every man, with a little help from pride, may think his own the best.

It seems to be the opinion of many, that expulsion is only a dismission of the representative to his constituents, with such a testimony against him as his sentence may comprise; and that if his constituents, notwithstanding the censure of the House, thinking his case hard, his fault trifling, or his excellencies such as overbalance it, should again chuse him as still worthy of their trust, the House cannot refuse him, for his punishment has purged his fault, and the right of electors must not be violated.

This is plausible, but not cogent. It is a scheme of representation, which would make a specious appearance in a political romance, but cannot be brought into practice among us, who see every day the towering head of speculation bow down unwillingly to grovelling experience.

Governments formed by chance, and gradually improved by such expedients, as the successive discovery of their defects happened to suggest, are never to be tried by a regular theory. They are fabricks of dissimilar materials, raised by different architects, upon different plans. We must be content with them as they are; should we attempt to mend their disproportions, we might easily demolish, and difficultly rebuild them.

Laws are now made, and customs are established; these are our rules, and by them we must be guided.

It is uncontrovertibly certain, that the Commons never intended to leave electors the liberty of returning them an expelled member, for they always require one to be chosen in the room of him that is

expelled, and I see not with what propriety a man can be re-chosen in his own room.

Expulsion, if this were its whole effect, might very often be desirable. Sedition, or obscenity, might be no greater crimes in the opinion of other electors, than in that of the freeholders of Middlesex; and many a wretch, whom his colleagues should expel, might come back persecuted into fame, and provoke with harder front a second expulsion.

Many of the representatives of the people can hardly be said to have been chosen at all. Some by inheriting a borough inherit a seat; and some sit by the favour of others, whom perhaps they may gratify by the act which provoked the expulsion. Some are safe by their popularity, and some by their alliances. None would dread expulsion, if this doctrine were received, but those who bought their elections, and who would be obliged to buy them again at a higher price.

But as uncertainties are to be determined by things certain, and customs to be explained, where it is possible, by written law, the patriots have triumphed with a quotation from an act of the 4th and 5th of Anne, which permits those to be re-chosen, whose seats are vacated by the acceptance of a place of profit. This they wisely consider as an expulsion, and from the permission, in this case, of a re-election, infer that every other expulsion leaves the delinquent entitled to the same indulgence. This is the paragraph:

"If any person, being chosen a member of the "House of Commons, shall accept of any office "from the crown, *during such time as he shall con-* "*tinue a member*, his election shall be, and is here-

" by declared to be void, and a new writ shall is-
" sue for a new election, as if such person so ac-
" cepting was naturally dead. *Nevertheless such*
" *person shall be capable of being again elected*, as if
" his place had not become void as aforesaid."

How this favours the doctrine of re-admission by a second choice, I am not able to discover. The statute of 30 Ch. II. had enacted, That *he who should sit in the House of Commons, without taking the oaths and subscribing the test, should be disabled to sit in the House during that Parliament, and a writ should issue for the election of a new member, in place of the member so disabled, as if such member had naturally died.*

This last clause is apparently copied in the act of Anne, but with the common fate of imitators. In the act of Charles, the political death continued during the parliament; in that of Anne it was hardly worth the while to kill the man whom the next breath was to revive. It is, however, apparent, that in the opinion of the parliament, the dead-doing lines would have kept him motionless, if he had not been recovered by a kind exception. A seat vacated, could not be regained without express permi sion of the same statute.

The right of being chosen again to a seat thus vacated, is not enjoyed by any general right, but required a special clause, and solicitous provision.

But what resemblance can imagination conceive between one man vacating his seat, by a mark of favour from the crown, and another driven from it for sedition and obscenity? The acceptance of a place contaminates no character; the crown that

gives it, intends to give with it always dignity, sometimes authority. The Commons, it is well known, think not worse of themselves or others for their offices of profit; yet profit implies temptation, and may expose a representative to the suspicion of his constituents; though, if they still think him worthy of their confidence, they may again elect him.

Such is the consequence. When a man is dismissed by law to his constituents, with new trust and new dignity, they may, if they think him incorruptible, restore him to his seat; what can follow, therefore, but that when the House drives out a varlet with publick infamy, he goes away with the like permission to return?

If infatuation be, as the proverb tells us, the forerunner of destruction, how near must be the ruin of a nation that can be incited against its governors, by sophistry like this. I may be excused if I catch the panick, and join my groans at this alarming crisis, with the general lamentation of weeping patriots.

Another objection is, that the Commons, by pronouncing the sentence of disqualification, make a law, and take upon themselves the power of the whole legislature. Many quotations are then produced to prove that the House of Commons can make no laws.

Three acts have been cited, disabling members for different terms on different occasions; and it is profoundly remarked, that if the Commons could by their own privilege have made a disqualification, their jealousy of their privileges would never have

admitted the concurrent sanction of the other powers.

I must for ever remind these puny controvertists, that those acts are laws of permanent obligation: that two of them are now in force, and that the other expired only when it had fulfilled its end. Such laws the Commons cannot make; they could, perhaps, have determined for themselves, that they would expel all who should not take the test, but they could leave no authority behind them, that should oblige the next parliament to expel them. They could refuse the South Sea Directors, but they could not entail the refusal. They can disqualify by vote, but not by law; they cannot know that the sentence of disqualification pronounced to-day may not become void to-morrow, by the dissolution of their own House. Yet while the same parliament sits, the disqualification continues, unless the vote be rescinded, and while it so continues, makes the votes, which freeholders may give to the interdicted candidate, useless and dead, since there cannot exist, with respect to the same subject at the same time, an absolute power to chuse and an absolute power to reject.

In 1614, the Attorney-General was voted incapable of a seat in the House of Commons; and the nation is triumphantly told, that though the vote never was revoked, the Attorney-General is now a member. He certainly may now be a member without revocation of the vote. A law is of perpetual obligation, but a vote is nothing when the voters are gone. A law is a compact reciprocally made by the legislative powers, and therefore not to be abrogated but by all the parties. A vote

is simply a resolution, which binds only him that is willing to be bound.

I have thus punctiliously and minutely pursued this disquisition, because I suspect that these reasoners, whose business is to deceive others, have sometimes deceived themselves, and I am willing to free them from their embarrassment, though I do not expect much gratitude for my kindness.

Other objections are yet remaining, for of political objections there cannot easily be an end. It has been observed, that vice is no proper cause of expulsion; for if the worst man in the House were always to be expelled, in time none would be left. But no man is expelled for being worst, he is expelled for being enormously bad; his conduct is compared, not with that of others, but with the rule of action.

The punishment of expulsion being in its own nature uncertain, may be too great or too little for the fault.

This must be the case of many punishments. Forfeiture of chattels is nothing to him that has no possessions. Exile itself may be accidentally a good; and indeed any punishment less than death is very different to different men.

But if this precedent be admitted and established, no man can hereafter be sure that he shall be represented by him whom he would choose. One half of the House may meet early in the morning, and snatch an opportunity to expel the other, and the greater part of the nation may by this stratagem be without its lawful representatives.

He that sees all this, sees very far. But I can tell him of greater evils yet behind. There is one possibility of wickedness, which, at this alarming crisis, has not yet been mentioned. Every one knows the malice, the subtility, the industry, the vigilance, and the greediness of the Scots. The Scotch members are about the number sufficient to make a house. I propose it to the consideration of the supporters of the Bill of Rights, whether there is not reason to suspect, that these hungry intruders from the North, are now contriving to expel all the English. We may then curse the hour in which it was determined, that expulsion and exclusion are the same. For who can guess what may be done when the Scots have the whole House to themselves?

Thus agreeable to custom and reason, notwithstanding all objections, real or imaginary; thus consistent with the practice of former times, and thus consequential to the original principles of government, is that decision by which so much violence of discontent has been excited, which has been so dolorously bewailed, and so outrageously resented.

Let us however not be seduced to put too much confidence in justice or in truth; they have often been found inactive in their own defence, and give more confidence than help to their friends and their advocates. It may perhaps be prudent to make one momentary concession to falsehood, by supposing the vote in Mr Lutterel's favour to be wrong.

All wrong ought to be rectified. If Mr Wilkes is deprived of a lawful seat, both he and his electors have reason to complain; but it will not be

easily found, why, among the innumerable wrongs of which a great part of mankind are hourly complaining, the whole care of the publick should be transferred to Mr Wilkes and the freeholders of Middlesex, who might all sink into non-existence, without any other effect, than that there would be room made for a new rabble, and a new retailer of sedition and obscenity. The cause of our country would suffer litttle; the rabble, whencesoever they come, will be always patriots, and always supporters of the Bill of Rights.

The House of Commons decides the disputes arising from elections. Was it ever supposed, that in all cases their decisions were right? Every man whose lawful election is defeated, is equally wronged with Mr Wilkes, and his constituents feel their disappointment with no less anguish than the freeholders of Middlesex. These decisions have often been apparently partial, and sometimes tyrannically oppressive. A majority has been given to a favourite candidate, by expunging votes which had always been allowed, and which therefore had the authority by which all votes are given, that of custom uninterrupted. When the Commons determine who shall be constituents, they may, with some propriety, be said to make law, because those determinations have hitherto, for the sake of quiet, been adopted by succeeding parliaments. A vote therefore of the House, when it operates as a law, is to individuals a law only temporary, but to communities perpetual.

Yet though all this has been done, and though at every new parliament much of this is expected to be done again, it has never produced in any for-

mer time such an *alarming crisis*. We have found by experience, that though a squire has given ale and venison in vain, and a borough has been compelled to see its dearest interest in the hands of him whom it did not trust, yet the general state of the nation has continued the same. The sun has risen, and the corn has grown, and whatever talk has been of the danger of property, yet he that ploughed the field commonly reaped it, and he that built a house was master of the door: the vexation excited by injustice suffered, or supposed to be suffered, by any private man, or single community, was local and temporary, it neither spread far, nor lasted long.

The nation looked on with little care, because there did not seem to be much danger. The consequence of small irregularities was not felt, and we had not yet learned to be terrified by very distant enemies.

But quiet and security are now at an end. Our vigilance is quickened, and our comprehension is enlarged. We not only see events in their causes, but before their causes; we hear the thunder while the sky is clear, and see the mine sprung before it is dug. Political wisdom has, by the force of English genius, been improved at last not only to political intuition, but to political prescience.

But it cannot, I am afraid, be said, that as we are grown wise, we are made happy. It is said of those who have the wonderful power called *second sight*, that they seldom see any thing but evil: political second sight has the same effect; we hear of nothing but of an alarming crisis, of violated rights, and expiring liberties. The morning rises upon

new wrongs, and the dreamer passes the night in imaginary shackles.

The sphere of anxiety is now enlarged; he that hitherto cared only for himself, now cares for the Publick; for he has learned that the happiness of individuals is comprised in the prosperity of the whole, and that his country never suffers, but he suffers with it, however it happens that he feels no pain.

Fired with this fever of epidemick patriotism, the taylor slips his thimble, the draper drops his yard, and the blacksmith lays down his hammer; they meet at an honest alehouse, consider the state of the nation, read or hear the last petition, lament the miseries of the time, are alarmed at the dreadful crisis, and subscribe to the support of the Bill of Rights.

It sometimes indeed happens, that an intruder of more benevolence than prudence attempts to disperse their cloud of dejection, and ease their hearts by seasonable consolation. He tells them, that though the government cannot be too diligently watched, it may be too hastily accused; and that, though private judgment is every man's right, yet we cannot judge of what we do not know; that we feel at present no evils which government can alleviate, and that the publick business is committed to men who have as much right to confidence as their adversaries; that the freeholders of Middlesex, if they could not choose Mr Wilkes, might have chosen any other man, and that *he trusts we have within the realm five hundred as good as he;* that even if this which has happened to Middlesex had happened to every other county, that one man should be made inca-

pable of being elected, it could produce no great change in the parliament, nor much contract the power of election; that what has been done is probably right; and that if it be wrong it is of little consequence, since a like case cannot easily occur; that expulsions are very rare, and if they should, by unbounded insolence of faction, become more frequent, the electors may easily provide a second choice.

All this he may say, but not half of this will be heard; his opponents will stun him and themselves with a confused sound of pensions and places, venality and corruption, oppression and invasion, slavery and ruin.

Outcries like these, uttered by malignity, and echoed by folly; general accusations of indeterminate wickedness; and obscure hints of impossible designs, dispersed among those that do not know their meaning, by those that know them to be false, have disposed part of the nation, though but a small part, to pester the court with ridiculous petitions.

The progress of a petition is well known. An ejected placeman goes down to his county or his borough, tells his friends of his inability to serve them, and his constituents of the corruption of the government. His friends readily understand that he who can get nothing, will have nothing to give. They agree to proclaim a meeting; meat and drink are plentifully provided; a crowd is easily brought together, and those who think that they know the reason of their meeting, undertake to tell those who know it not. Ale and clamour unite their powers;

the crowd, condensed and heated, begins to ferment with the leven of sedition. All see a thousand evils, though they cannot show them, and grow impatient for a remedy, though they know not what.

A speech is then made by the *Cicero* of the day; he says much, and suppresses more, and credit is equally given to what he tells, and what he conceals. The petition is read and universally approved. Those who are sober enough to write, add their names, and the rest would sign it if they could.

Every man goes home and tells his neighbour of the glories of the day; how he was consulted and what he advised; how he was invited into the great room, where his lordship called him by his name; how he was caressed by Sir Francis, Sir Joseph, or Sir George; how he ate turtle and venison, and drank unanimity to the three brothers.

The poor loiterer, whose shop had confined him, or whose wife had locked him up, hears the tale of luxury with envy, and at last inquires what was their petition. Of the petition nothing is remembered by the narrator, but that it spoke much of fears and apprehensions, and something very alarming, and that he is sure it is against the government; the other is convinced that it must be right, and wishes he had been there, for he loves wine and venison, and is resolved as long as he lives to be against the government.

The petition is then handed from town to town, and from house to house, and wherever it comes the inhabitants flock together, that they may see that which must be sent to the king. Names are easily

collected. One man signs because he hates the papist; another because he has vowed destruction to the turnpikes; one because it will vex the parson; another because he owes his lanlord nothing; one because he is rich; another because he is poor; one to shew that he is not afraid, and another to shew that he can write.

The passage, however, is not always smooth. Those who collect contributions to sedition, sometimes apply to a man of higher rank and more enlightened mind, who, instead of lending them his name, calmly reproves them for being seducers of the people.

You who are here, says he, complaining of venality, are yourselves the agents of those who, having estimated themselves at too high a price, are only angry that they are not bought. You are appealing from the parliament to the rabble, and inviting those who scarcely, in the most common affairs, distinguish right from wrong, to judge of a question complicated with law written and unwritten, with the general principles of government, and the particular customs of the House of Commons; you are shewing them a grievance, so distant that they cannot see it, and so light that they cannot feel it; for how, but by unnecessary intelligence and artificial provocation, should the farmers and shopkeepers of Yorkshire and Cumberland know or care how Middlesex is represented? Instead of wandering thus round the county to exasperate the rage of party, and darken the suspicions of ignorance, it is the duty of men like you, who have leisure for inquiry, to lead back the people to their honest labour; to tell them,

that submission is the duty of the ignorant, and content the virtue of the poor; that they have no skill in the art of government, nor any interest in the dissentions of the great; and when you meet with any, as some there are, whose understandings are capable of conviction, it will become you to allay this foaming ebullition, by shewing them that they have as much happiness as the condition of life will easily receive, and that a government, of which an erroneous or unjust representation of Middlesex is the greatest crime that interest can discover, or malice can upbraid, is government approaching nearer to perfection, than any that experience has known, or history related.

The drudges of sedition wish to change their ground, they hear him with sullen silence, feel conviction without repentance, and are confounded, but not abashed; they go forward to another door, and find a kinder reception from a man enraged against the government, because he has just been paying the tax upon his windows.

That a petition for a dissolution of the parliament will at all times have its favourers, may be easily imagined. The people indeed do not expect that one House of Commons will be much honester or much wiser than another; they do not suppose that the taxes will be lightened; or, though they have been so often taught to hope it, that soap and candles will be cheaper; they expect no redress of grievances, for of no grievances but taxes do they complain; they wish not the extension of liberty, for they do not feel any restraint; about the security of privilege or property they are totally careless, for they see no property invaded,

nor know, till they are told, that any privilege has suffered violation.

Least of all do they expect, that any future parliament will lessen its own powers, or communicate to the people that authority which it has once obtained.

Yet a new parliament is sufficiently desirable. The year of election is a year of jollity; and, what is still more delightful, a year of equality. The glutton now eats the delicacies for which he longed when he could not purchase them, and the drunkard has the pleasure of wine without the cost. The drone lives a while without work, and the shopkeeper, in the flow of money, raises his price. The mechanick that trembled at the presence of Sir Joseph, now bids him come again for an answer; and the poacher whose gun has been seized, now finds an opportunity to reclaim it. Even the honest man is not displeased to see himself important, and willingly resumes in two years that power which he had resigned for seven. Few love their friends so well as not to desire superiority by unexpensive benefaction.

Yet, notwithstanding all these motives to compliance, the promoters of petitions have not been successful. Few could be persuaded to lament evils which they did not suffer, or to solicit for redress which they do not want. The petition has been, in some places, rejected; and perhaps in all but one, signed only by the meanest and grossest of the people.

Since this expedient now invented or revived to distress the government, and equally practicable at all times by all who shall be excluded from power

and from profit, has produced so little effect, let us consider the opposition as no longer formidable. The great engine has recoiled upon them. They thought that *the terms* they *sent were terms of weight*, which would have *amazed all and stumbled many;* but the consternation is now over, and their foes stand upright as before.

With great propriety and dignity the king has, in his speech, neglected or forgotten them. He might easily know, that what was presented as the sense of the people, is the sense only of the profligate and dissolute; and that whatever parliament should be convened, the same petitioners would be ready, for the same reason, to request its dissolution.

As we once had a rebellion of the clowns, we have now an opposition of the pedlars. The quiet of the nation has been for years disturbed by a faction, against which all factions ought to conspire; for its original principle is the desire of levelling; it is only animated under the name of zeal, by the natural malignity of the mean against the great.

When in the confusion which the English invasions produced in France, the villains, imagining that they had found the golden hour of emancipation, took arms in their hands, the knights of both nations considered the cause as common, and, suspending the general hostility, united to chastise them.

The whole conduct of this despicable faction is distinguished by plebeian grossness, and savage indecency. To misrepresent the actions and the principles of their enemies is common to all parties; but the insolence of invective, and brutality of re-

proach, which have lately prevailed, are peculiar to this.

An infallible characteristick of meanness is cruelty. This is the only faction that has shouted at the condemnation of a criminal, and that, when his innocence procured his pardon, has clamoured for his blood.

All other parties, however enraged at each other, have agreed to treat the throne with decency; but these low-born railers have attacked not only the authority, but the character of their sovereign, and have endeavoured, surely without effect, to alienate the affections of the people from the only king, who, for almost a century, has much appeared to desire, or much endeavoured to deserve them. They have insulted him with rudeness and with menaces, which were never excited by the gloomy sullenness of William, even when half the nation denied him their allegiance; nor by the dangerous bigotry of James, unless when he was finally driven from his palace; and with which scarcely the open hostilities of rebellion ventured to vilify the unhappy Charles, even in the remarks on the cabinet of *Naseby*.

It is surely not unreasonable to hope that the nation will consult its dignity, if not its safety, and disdain to be protected or enslaved by the declaimers or the plotters of a city-tavern. Had Rome fallen by the Catilinarian conspiracy, she might have consoled her fate by the greatness of her destroyers; but what would have alleviated the disgrace of England, had her government been changed by *Tiler* or by *Ket*?

One part of the nation has never before contended with the other, but for some weighty and apparent interest. If the means were violent, the end was great. The civil war was fought for what each army called and believed the best religion, and the best government. The struggle in the reign of Anne, was to exclude or restore an exile king. We are now disputing, with almost equal animosity, whether Middlesex shall be represented or not by a criminal from a jail.

The only comfort left in such degeneracy is that a lower state can be no longer possible.

In this contemptuous censure, I mean not to include every single man. In all lead, says the chemist, there is silver; and in all copper there is gold. But mingled masses are justly denominated by the greater quanity, and when the precious particles are not worth extraction, a faction and a pig must be melted down together to the forms and offices that chance allots them.

Fiunt urceoli, pulves, tartago, patellæ.

A few weeks will now show whether the government can be shaken by empty noise, and whether the factions which depend upon its influence, has not deceived alike the Publick and itself. That it should have continued till now, is sufficiently shameful. None can indeed wonder that it has been supported by the sectaries, the natural fomenters of sedition, and confederates of the rabble, of whose religion little now remains but hatred of establishments, and who are angry to find separation now only tolerated, which was once re-

warded; but every honest man must lament, that it has been regarded with frigid neutrality by the tories, who, being long accustomed to signalize their principles by opposition to the court, do not yet consider that they have at last a king who knows not the name of party, and who wishes to be the common father of all his people.

As a man inebriated only by vapours, soon recovers in the open air; a nation discontented to madness, without any adequate cause, will return to its wits and its allegiance when a little pause has cooled it to reflection. Nothing, therefore, is necessary, at this *alarming crisis*, but to consider the alarm as false. To make concessions, is to encourage encroachment. Let the court despise the faction, and the disappointed people will soon deride it.

THOUGHTS

ON THE

LATE TRANSACTIONS

RESPECTING

FALKLAND'S ISLANDS.

[1771.]

To proportion the eagerness of contest to its importance seems too hard a task for human wisdom. The pride of wit has kept ages busy in the discussion of useless questions, and the pride of power has destroyed armies to gain or to keep unprofitable possessions.

Not many years have passed since the cruelties of war were filling the world with terror and with sorrow; rage was at last appeased, or strength exhausted, and to the harassed nations peace was restored, with its pleasures and its benefits. Of this state all felt the happiness, and all implored the continuance; but what continuance of happiness can be expected, when the whole system of European empire can be in danger of a new concussion, by a contention for a few spots of earth,

which, in the deserts of the ocean, had almost escaped human notice, and which, if they had not happened to make a sea-mark, had perhaps never had a name?

Fortune often delights to dignify what nature has neglected, and that renown which cannot be claimed by intrinsick excellence or greatness, is sometimes derived from unexpected accidents. The Rubicon was ennobled by the passage of Cæsar, and the time is now come when Falkland's Islands demand their historian.

But the writer to whom this employment shall be assigned, will have few opportunities of descriptive splendor, or narrative elegance. Of other countries it is told how often they have changed their government; these islands have hitherto changed only their name. Of heroes to conquer, or legislators to civilize, here has been no appearance; nothing has happened to them, but that they have been sometimes seen by wandering navigators, who passed by them in search of better habitations.

When the Spaniards, who, under the conduct of Columbus, discovered America, had taken possession of its most wealthy regions; they surprised and terrified Europe by a sudden and unexampled influx of riches. They were made at once insupportably insolent, and might perhaps have become irresistibly powerful, had not their mountainous treasures been scattered in the air with the ignorant profusion of unaccustomed opulence.

The greater part of the European potentates saw this stream of riches flowing into Spain without attempting to dip their own hands in the golden fountain. France had no naval skill or power; Por-

tugal was extending her dominions in the east over regions formed in the gaiety of nature; the Hanseatick league, being planned only for the security of traffick, had no tendency to discovery or invasion; and the commercial states of Italy, growing rich by trading between Asia and Europe, and not lying upon the ocean, did not desire to seek, by great hazards, at a distance, what was almost at home to be found with safety.

The English alone were animated by the success of the Spanish navigators, to try if any thing was left that might reward adventure, or incite appropriation. They sent Cabot into the north, but in the north there was no gold or silver to be found. The best regions were pre-occupied, yet they still continued their hopes and their labours. They were the second nation that dared the extent of the Pacifick Ocean, and the second circumnavigators of the globe.

By the war between Elizabeth and Philip, the wealth of America became lawful prize, and those who were less afraid of danger than of poverty, supposed that riches might easily be obtained by plundering the Spaniards. Nothing is difficult when gain and honour unite their influence; the spirit and vigour of these expeditions enlarged our views of the new world, and made us first acquainted with its remoter coasts.

In the fatal voyage of Cavendish (1592), Captain Davis, who, being sent out as his associate, was afterwards parted from him or deserted him, as he was driven by violence of weather about the straits of Magellan, is supposed to have been the first who saw the islands now called Falkland's

Islands, but his distress permitted him not to make any observation, and he left them, as he found them, without a name.

Not long afterwards (1594) Sir Richard Hawkins being in the same seas with the same designs, saw these islands again, if they are indeed the same islands, and, in honour of his mistress, called them *Hawkin's Maiden Land.*

This voyage was not of renown sufficient to procure a general reception to the new name, for when the Dutch, who had now become strong enough not only to defend themselves, but to attack their masters, sent (1598) Verhagen and Sebald de Wert, into the South Seas, these islands, which were not supposed to have been known before, obtained the denomination of *Sebald's Islands*, and were from that time placed in the charts; though Frezier tells us, that they were yet considered as of doubtful existence.

Their present English name was probably given them (1689) by Strong, whose journal, yet unprinted, may be found in the Museum. This name was adopted by Halley, and has from that time, I believe, been received into our maps.

The privateers which were put into motion by the wars of William and Anne, saw those islands, and mention them; but they were yet not considered as territories worth a contest. Strong affirmed that there was no wood, and Dampier suspected that they had no water.

Frezier describes their appearance with more distinctness, and mentions some ships of St Maloes, by which they had been visited, and to which he seems willing enough to ascribe the honour of dis-

covering islands which yet he admits to have been seen by Hawkins, and named by Sebald de Wert. He, I suppose, in honour of his countrymen, called them the *Malouines*, the denomination now used by the Spaniards, who seem not, till very lately, to have thought them important enough to deserve a name.

Since the publication of Anson's voyage, they have very much changed their opinion, finding a settlement in Pepy's or Falkland's Island recommended by the author as necessary to the success of our future expeditions against the coast of Chili, and as of such use and importance, that it would produce many advantages in peace, and in war would make us masters of the South Sea.

Scarcely any degree of judgment is sufficient to restrain the imagination from magnifying that on which it is long detained. The relator of Anson's voyage had heated his mind with its various events, had partaken the hope with which it was begun, and the vexation suffered by its various miscarriages, and then thought nothing could be of greater benefit to the nation than that which might promote the success of such another enterprise.

Had the heroes of that history even performed and attained all that when they first spread their sails they ventured to hope, the consequence would yet have produced very little hurt to the Spaniards, and very little benefit to the English. They would have taken a few towns; Anson and his companions would have shared the plunder or the ransom; and the Spaniards, finding their southern territories accessible; would for the future have guarded them better.

That such a settlement may be of use in war, no man that considers its situation will deny. But war is not the whole business of life; it happens but seldom, and every man, either good or wise, wishes that its frequency were still less. That conduct which betrays designs of future hostility, if it does not excite violence, will always generate malignity; it must for ever exclude confidence and friendship, and continue a cold and sluggish rivalry, by a sly reciprocation of indirect injuries, without the bravery of war, or the security of peace.

The advantage of such a settlement in time of peace is, I think, not easily to be proved. For what use can it have but of a station for contraband traders, a nursery of fraud, and a receptacle of theft? Narborough, about a century ago, was of opinion, that no advantage could be obtained in voyages to the South Sea, except by such an armament as, with a sailor's morality, *might trade by force.* It is well known that the prohibitions of foreign commerce are, in these countries, to the last degree rigorous, and that no man not authorized by the king of Spain can trade there but by force or stealth. Whatever profit is obtained must be gained by the violence of rapine, or dexterity of fraud.

Government will not perhaps soon arrive at such purity and excellence, but that some connivance at least will be indulged to the triumphant robber and successful cheat. He that brings wealth home is seldom interrogated by what means it was obtained. This, however, is one of those modes of corruption with which mankind ought always to struggle, and which they may in time hope to overcome. There is reason to expect, that as the world is

more enlightened, policy and morality will at last be reconciled, and that nations will learn not to do what they would not suffer.

But the silent toleration of suspected guilt is a degree of depravity far below that which openly incites and manifestly protects it. To pardon a pirate may be injurious to mankind; but how much greater is the crime of opening a port in which all pirates shall be safe? The contraband trader is not more worthy of protections: if with Narborough he trades by force, he is a pirate; if he trades secretly, he is only a thief. Those who honestly refuse his traffick, he hates as obstructors of his profit; and those with whom he deals he cheats, because he knows that they dare not complain. He lives with a heart full of that malignity which fear of detection always generates in those who are to defend unjust acquisitions against lawful authority; and when he comes home with riches thus acquired, he brings a mind hardened in evil, too proud for reproof, and too stupid for reflection; he offends the high by his insolence, and corrupts the low by his example.

Whether these truths were forgotten or despised, or whether some better purpose was then in agitation, the representation made in Anson's voyage had such effect upon the statesmen of that time, that (1748) some sloops were fitted out for the fuller knowledge of Pepy's and Falkland's Islands, and for further discoveries in the South Sea. This expedition, though perhaps designed to be secret, was not long concealed from Wall, the Spanish ambassador, who so vehemently opposed it, and so strongly maintained the right of the Spaniards to

the exclusive dominion of the South Sea, that the English ministry relinquished part of their original design, and declared that the examination of those two islands was the utmost that their orders should comprise.

This concession was sufficiently liberal or sufficiently submissive; yet the Spanish court was neither gratified by our kindness, nor softened by our humility. Sir Benjamin Keene, who then resided at Madrid, was interrogated by Carvajal concerning the visit intended to Pepy's and Falkland's Islands in terms of great jealousy and discontent; and the intended expedition was represented, if not as a direct violation of the late peace, yet as an act inconsistent with amicable intentions, and contrary to the professions of mutual kindness which then passed between Spain and England. Keene was directed to protest that nothing more than mere discovery was intended, and that no settlement was to be established. The Spaniard readily replied, that if this was a voyage of wanton curiosity, it might be gratified with less trouble, for he was willing to communicate whatever was known; that to go so far only to come back, was no reasonable act; and it would be a slender sacrifice to peace and friendship to omit a voyage in which nothing was to be gained; that if we left the places as we found them, the voyage was useless; and if we took possession, it was a hostile armament, nor could we expect that the Spaniards would suppose us to visit the southern parts of America only from curiosity, after the scheme proposed by the author of Anson's voyage.

When once we had disowned all purpose of set-

tling, it is apparent that we could not defend the propriety of our expedition by arguments equivalent to Carvajal's objections. The ministry therefore dismissed the whole design, but no declaration was required by which our right to pursue it hereafter might be annulled.

From this time Falkland's Island was forgotten or neglected, till the conduct of naval affairs was intrusted to the Earl of Egmont, a man whose mind was vigorous and ardent, whose knowledge was extensive, and whose designs were magnificent; but who had somewhat vitiated his judgment by too much indulgence of romantick projects and airy speculations.

Lord Egmont's eagerness after something new determined him to make inquiry after Falkland's Island, and he sent out captain Byron, who in the beginning of the year 1765, took, he says, a formal possession in the name of his Britannick majesty.

The possession of this place is, according to Mr Byron's representation, no despicable acquisition. He conceived the island to be six or seven hundred miles round, and represented it as a region naked indeed of wood, but which, if that defect were supplied, would have all that nature, almost all that luxury could want. The harbour he found capacious and secure, and therefore thought it worthy of the name of Egmont. Of water there was no want, and the ground, he described as having all the excellencies of soil, and as covered with antiscorbutick herbs, the restoratives of the sailor. Provision was easily to be had, for they killed almost every day an hundred geese to each ship, by pelt-

ing them with stones. Not content with physick and with food, he searched yet deeper for the value of the new dominion. He dug in quest of ore, found iron in abundance, and did not despair of nobler metals.

A country thus fertile and delightful, fortunately found where none would have expected it, about the fiftieth degree of southern latitude, could not without great supineness be neglected. Early in the next year (January 8, 1766) Captain Macbride arrived at Port Egmont, where he erected a small blockhouse, and stationed a garrison. His description was less flattering. He found, what he calls, a mass of islands and broken lands, of which the soil was nothing but a bog, with no better prospect than that of barren mountains, beaten by storms almost perpetual. Yet this, says he, is summer, and if the winds of winter hold their natural proportion, those who lie but two cables' length from the shore, must pass weeks without any communication with it. The plenty which regaled Mr Byron, and which might have supported not only armies, but armies of Patagons, was no longer to be found. The geese were too wise to stay when men violated their haunts, and Mr Macbride's crew could only now and then kill a goose when the weather would permit. All the quadrupeds which he met there were foxes, supposed by him to have been brought upon the ice; but of useless animals, such as sea lions and penguins, which he calls vermin, the number was incredible. He allows, however, that those who touch at these islands may find geese and snipes, and in the summer months, wild celery and sorrel.

No token was seen by either, of any settlement ever made upon this island, and Mr Macbride thought himself so secure from hostile disturbance, that when he erected his wooden blockhouse, he omitted to open the ports and loopholes.

When a garrison was stationed at port Egmont, it was necessary to try what sustenance the ground could be by culture excited to produce. A garden was prepared, but the plants that sprung up, withered away in immaturity. Some fir-seeds were sown; but though this be the native tree of rugged climates, the young firs that rose above the ground died like weaker herbage. The cold continued long, and the ocean seldom was at rest.

Cattle succeeded better than vegetables. Goats, sheep, and hogs, that were carried thither, were found to thrive and increase as in other places.

Nil mortalibus arduum est. There is nothing which human courage will not undertake, and little that human patience will not endure. The garrison lived upon Falkland's Islands, shrinking from the blast, and shuddering at the billows.

This was a colony which could never become independent, for it never could be able to maintain itself. The necessary supplies were annually sent from England, at an expence which the Admiralty began to think would not quickly be repaid. But shame of deserting a project, and unwillingness to contend with a projector that meant well, continued the garrison, and supplied it with regular remittances of stores and provision.

That of which we were almost weary ourselves we did not expect any one to envy; and therefore supposed that we should be permitted to reside in

Falkland's Island, the undisputed lords of tempest-beaten barrenness.

But on the 28th of November 1769, Captain Hunt, observing a Spanish schooner hovering about the island and surveying it, sent the commander a message, by which he required him to depart. The Spaniard made an appearance of obeying, but in two days came back with letters written by the governor of Port Solidad, and brought by the chief officer of a settlement on the east part of Falkland's Island.

In this letter, dated Malouina, November 30, the governor complains, that Captain Hunt, when he ordered the schooner to depart, assumed a power to which he could have no pretensions, by sending an imperious message to the Spaniards in the king of Spain's own dominions.

In another letter, sent at the same time, he supposes the English to be in that part only by accident, and to be ready to depart at the first warning. This letter was accompanied by a present, of which, says he, *if it be neither equal to my desire nor to your merit, you must impute the deficiency to the situation of us both.*

In return to this hostile civility, Captain Hunt warned them from the island, which he claimed in the name of the king, as belonging to the English by right of the first discovery and the first settlement.

This was an assertion of more confidence than certainty. The right of discovery, indeed, has already appeared to be probable, but the right which priority of settlement confers I know not whether we yet can establish.

On December 10, the officer sent by the governor of Port Solidad made three protests against Captain Hunt; for threatening to fire upon him; for opposing his entrance into Port Egmont; and for entering himself into Port Solidad. On the 12th the governor of Port Solidad formally warned Captain Hunt to leave Port Egmont, and to forbear the navigation of these seas, without permission from the king of Spain.

To this Captain Hunt replied by repeating his former claim; by declaring that his orders were to keep possession; and by once more warning the Spaniards to depart.

The next month produced more protests and more replies, of which the tenor was nearly the same. The operations of such harmless enmity having produced no effect, were then reciprocally discontinued, and the English were left for a time to enjoy the pleasures of Falkland's Island without molestation.

This tranquillity, however, did not last long. A few months afterwards (June 4, 1770), the Industry, a Spanish frigate, commanded by an officer whose name was Madariaga, anchored in Port Egmont, bound, as was said, for Port Solidad, and reduced, by a passage from Buenos Ayres of fifty-three days, to want of water.

Three days afterwards four other frigates entered the port, and a broad pendant, such as is borne by the commander of a naval armament, was displayed from the Industry. Captain Farmer, of the Swift frigate, who commanded the garrison, ordered the crew of the Swift to come on shore, and assist in its defence; and directed Captain

Maltby to bring the Favourite frigate, which he commanded, nearer to the land. The Spaniards easily discovering the purpose of his motion, let him know, that if he weighed his anchor, they would fire upon his ship; but paying no regard to these menaces, he advanced towards the shore. The Spanish fleet followed, and two shots were fired, which fell at a distance from him. He then sent to inquire the reason of such hostility, and was told that the shots were intended only as signals.

Both the English captains wrote the next day to Madariaga, the Spanish commodore, warning him from the island, as from a place which the English held by right of discovery.

Madariaga, who seems to have had no desire of unnecessary mischief, invited them (June 9), to send an officer who should take a view of his forces, that they might be convinced of the vanity of resistance, and do that without compulsion which he was upon refusal prepared to enforce.

An officer was sent, who found sixteen hundred men, with a train of twenty-seven cannon, four mortars, and two hundred bombs. The fleet consisted of five frigates, from twenty to thirty guns, which were now stationed opposite to the Block-house.

He then sent them a formal memorial, in which he maintained his master's right to the whole Magellanick region, and exhorted the English to retire quietly from the settlement, which they could neither justify by right, nor maintain by power.

He offered them the liberty of carrying away whatever they were desirous to remove, and pro-

mised his receipt for what should be left, that no loss might be suffered by them,

His propositions were expressed in terms of great civility; but he concludes with demanding an answer in fifteen minutes.

Having while he was writing received the letters of warning written the day before by the English captains, he told them that he thought himself able to prove the king of Spain's title to all those countries, but that this was no time for verbal altercations. He persisted in his determination, and allowed only fifteen minutes for an answer.

To this it was replied by Captain Farmer, that though there had been prescribed yet a shorter time, he should still resolutely defend his charge; that this, whether menace or force, would be considered as an insult on the British flag, and that satisfaction would certainly be required.

On the next day (June 10) Madariaga landed his forces, and it may be easily imagined that he had no bloody conquest. The English had only a wooden block-house, built at Woolwich, and carried in pieces to the island, with a small battery of cannon. To contend with obstinacy had been only to lavish life without use or hope. After the exchange of a very few shots, a capitulation was proposed.

The Spanish commander acted with moderation; he exerted little of the conqueror; what he had offered before the attack, he granted after the victory; the English were allowed to leave the place with every honour, only their departure was delayed by the terms of the capitulation twenty days; and to secure their stay, the rudder of the

Favourite was taken off. What they desired to carry away they removed without molestation; and of what they left an inventory was drawn, for which the Spanish officer by his receipt promised to be accountable.

Of this petty revolution, so sudden and so distant, the English ministry could not possibly have such notice as might enable them to prevent it. The conquest, if such it may be called, cost but three days; for the Spaniards, either supposing the garrison stronger than it was, or resolving to trust nothing to chance, or considering that, as their force was greater, there was less danger of bloodshed, came with a power that made resistance ridiculous, and at once demanded and obtained possession.

The first account of any discontent expressed by the Spaniards was brought by Captain Hunt, who, arriving at Plymouth June 3, 1770, informed the Admiralty that the island had been claimed in December by the governor of Port Solidad.

This claim, made by an officer of so little dignity, without any known direction from his superiors, could be considered only as the zeal or officiousness of an individual, unworthy of publick notice, or the formality of remonstrance.

In August Mr Harris, the resident at Madrid, gave notice to Lord Weymouth of an account newly brought to Cadiz, that the English were in possession of Port Cuizada, the same which we call Port Egmont, in the Magellanick sea; that in January they had warned away two Spanish ships; and that an armament was sent out in May from Buenos Ayres to dislodge them.

It was perhaps not yet certain that this account was true; but the information, however faithful, was too late for prevention. It was easily known, that a fleet dispatched in May had before August succeeded or miscarried.

In October, Captain Maltby came to England, and gave the account which I have now epitomised, of his expulsion from Falkland's Islands.

From this moment the whole nation can witness that no time was lost. The navy was surveyed, the ships refitted, and commanders appointed; and a powerful fleet was assembled, well manned and well stored, with expedition, after so long a peace, perhaps never known before, and with vigour, which, after the waste of so long a war, scarcely any other nation had been capable of exerting.

This preparation, so illustrious in the eyes of Europe, and so efficacious in its event, was obstructed by the utmost power of that noisy faction which has too long filled the kingdom, sometimes with the roar of empty menace, and sometimes with the yell of hypocritical lamentation. Every man saw, and every honest man saw with detestation, that they who desired to force their sovereign into war, endeavoured at the same time to disable him from action.

The vigour and spirit of the ministry easily broke through all the machinations of these pygmy rebels, and our armament was quickly such as was likely to make our negociations effectual.

The prince of Masseran, in his first conference with the English ministers on this occasion, owned that he had from Madrid received intelligence that the English had been forcibly expelled from Falkland's

Island by Buccarelli, the governor of Buenos Ayres, without any particular orders from the King of Spain. But being asked, whether in his master's name he disavowed Buccarelli's violence, he refused to answer without direction.

The scene of negociation was now removed to Madrid, and in September Mr Harris was directed to demand from Grimaldi, the Spanish minister, the restitution of Falkland's Island, and a disavowal of Buccarelli's hostilities.

It was to be expected that Grimaldi would object to us our own behaviour, who had ordered the Spaniards to depart from the same island. To this it was replied, That the English forces were indeed directed to warn other nations away; but if compliance were refused, to proceed quietly in making their settlement, and suffer the subjects of whatever power to remain there without molestation. By possession thus taken, there was only a disputable claim advanced, which might be peaceably and regularly decided, without insult and without force; and if the Spaniards had complained at the British Court, their reasons would have been heard, and all injuries redressed; but that, by presupposing the justice of their own title, and having recourse to arms, without any previous notice or remonstrance, they had violated the peace, and insulted the British government; and therefore it was expected that satisfaction should be made by publick disavowal, and immediate restitution.

The answer of Grimaldi was ambiguous and cold. He did not allow that any particular orders had been given for driving the English from their settlement; but made no scruple of declaring, that

such an ejection was nothing more than the settlers might have expected; and that Buccarelli had not, in his opinion, incurred any blame, as the general injunctions to the American governors were, to suffer no incroachments on the Spanish dominions.

In October, the prince of Masseran proposed a convention for the accommodation of differences by mutual concessions, in which the warning given to the Spaniards by Hunt should be disavowed on one side, and the violence used by Buccarelli on the other. This offer was considered as little less than a new insult, and Grimaldi was told, that injury required reparation; that when either party had suffered evident wrong, there was not the parity subsisting which is implied in conventions and contracts; that we considered ourselves as openly insulted, and demanded satisfaction plenary and unconditional.

Grimaldi affected to wonder that we were not yet appeased by their concessions. They had, he said, granted all that was required; they had offered to restore the island in the state in which they found it; but he thought that they likewise might hope for some regard, and that the warning sent by Hunt would be disavowed.

Mr Harris, our minister at Madrid, insisted that the injured party had a right to unconditional reparation, and Grimaldi delayed his answer that a council might be called. In a few days orders were dispatched to prince Masseran, by which he was commissioned to declare the king of Spain's readiness to satisfy the demands of the king of England, in expectation of receiving from him re-

ciprocal satisfaction, by the disavowal, so often required, of Hunt's warning.

Finding the Spaniards disposed to make no other acknowledgments, the English ministry considered a war as not likely to be long avoided. In the latter end of November, private notice was given of their danger to the merchants at Cadiz, and the officers absent from Gibraltar were remanded to their posts. Our naval force was every day increased, and we made no abatement of our original demand.

The obstinacy of the Spanish court still continued, and about the end of the year all hope of reconciliation was so nearly extinguished, that Mr Harris was directed to withdraw, with the usual forms, from his residence at Madrid.

Moderation is commonly firm, and firmness is commonly successful; having not swelled our first requisition with any superfluous appendages, we had nothing to yield, we therefore only repeated our first proposition, prepared for war, though desirous of peace.

About this time, as is well known, the king of France dismissed Choiseul from his employments. What effect this revolution of the French court had upon the Spanish councils, I pretend not to be informed. Choiseul had always professed pacifick dispositions, nor is it certain, however it may be suspected, that he talked in different strains to different parties.

It seems to be almost the universal error of historians to suppose it politically, as it is physically true, that every effect has a proportionate cause. In the inanimate action of matter upon matter, the

motion produced can be but equal to the force of the moving power; but the operations of life, whether private or publick, admit no such laws. The caprices of voluntary agents laugh at calculation. It is not always that there is a strong reason for a great event. Obstinacy and flexibility, malignity and kindness, give place alternately to each other, and the reason of these vicissitudes, however important may be the consequences, often escapes the mind in which the change is made.

Whether the alteration which began in January to appear in the Spanish councils, had any other cause than conviction of the impropriety of their past conduct, and of the danger of a new war, it is not easy to decide; but they began, whatever was the reason, to relax their haughtiness, and Mr Harris's departure was countermanded.

The demands first made by England were still continued, and on January 22d, the prince of Masseran delivered a declaration, in which the king of Spain *disavows the violent enterprise of Buccarelli*, and promises *to restore the port and fort called* Egmont, *with all the artillery and stores according to the inventory*.

To this promise of restitution is subjoined that *this engagement to restore* Port Egmont, *cannot, nor ought in any wise to affect the question of the prior right of sovereignty of the* Malouine, *otherwise called* Falkland's Islands.

This concession was accepted by the Earl of Rochford, who declared on the part of his master, that the prince of Masseran being authorised by his catholick majesty, *to offer in his majesty's name to the king of* Great Britain, *a satisfaction for the in-*

jury done him by dispossessing him of Port Egmont, and having signed a declaration expressing that his catholick majesty *disavows the expedition against* Port Egmont, and engages to restore it in the state in which it stood before the 10th of June 1770, *his* Britannick *majesty will look upon the said declaration, together with the full performance of the engagement on the part of his catholick majesty, as a satisfaction for the injury done to the crown of* Great Britain.

This is all that was originally demanded. The expedition is disavowed, and the island is restored. An injury is acknowledged by the reception of Lord Rochford's paper, who twice mentions the word *injury* and twice the word *saitsfaction.*

The Spaniards have stipulated that the grant of possession shall not preclude the question of prior right, a question which we shall probably make no haste to discuss, and a right of which no formal resignation was ever required. This reserve has supplied matter for much clamour, and perhaps the English ministry would have been better pleased had the declaration been without it. But when we have obtained all that was asked, why should we complain that we have not more? When the possession is conceded, where is the evil that the right, which that concession supposes to be merely hypothetical, is referred to the Greek calends for a future disquisition? Were the Switzers less free or less secure, because after their defection from the house of Austria they had never been declared independent before the treaty of Westphalia? Is the king of France less a sovereign because the king of England partakes his title?

If sovereignty implies undisputed right, scarce any prince is a sovereign through his whole dominions; if sovereignty consists in this, that no superior is acknowledged, our king reigns at Port Egmont with sovereign authority. Almost every new acquired territory is in some degree controvertible, and till the controversy is decided, a term very difficult to be fixed, all that can be had is real possession and actual dominion.

This surely is a sufficient answer to the feudal gabble of a man who is every day lessening that splendour of character which once illuminated the kingdom, then dazzled, and afterwards inflamed it; and for whom it will be happy if the nation shall at last dismiss him to nameless obscurity, with that equipoise of blame and praise which Corneille allows to Richlieu, a man who, I think, had much of his merit, and many of his faults.

Chacun parle à son gré de ce grand Cardinal,
Mais pour moi je n'en dirai rien;
Il m'a fait trop de bien pour en dire du mal,
Il m'a fait trop de mal pour en dire du bien.

To push advantages too far is neither generous nor just. Had we insisted on a concession of antecedent right, it may not misbecome us, either as moralists or politicians, to consider what Grimaldi could have answered. We have already, he might say, granted you the whole effect of right, and have not denied you the name. We have not said that the right was ours before this concession, but only that what right we had, is not by this concession vacated. We have now for more than

two centuries ruled large tracts of the American continent, by a claim which perhaps is valid only upon this consideration, that no power can produce a better; by the right of discovery and prior settlement. And by such titles almost all the dominions of the earth are holden, except that their original is beyond memory, and greater obscurity gives them greater veneration. Should we allow this plea to be annulled, the whole fabrick of our empire shakes at the foundation. When you suppose yourselves to have first descried the disputed island, you suppose what you can hardly prove. We were at least the general discoverers of the Magellanick region, and have hitherto held it with all its adjacencies. The justice of this tenure the world has hitherto admitted, and yourselves at least tacitly allowed it, when about twenty years ago you desisted from your purposed expedition, and expressly disowned any design of settling, where you are now not content to settle and to reign, without extorting such a confession of original right as may invite every other nation to follow you.

To considerations such as these, it is reasonable to impute that anxiety of the Spaniards, from which the importance of this island is inferred by Junius, one of the few writers of his despicable faction whose name does not disgrace the page of an opponent. The value of the thing disputed may be very different to him that gains and him that loses it. The Spaniards, by yielding Falkland's Island, have admitted a precedent of what they think encroachment; have suffered a breach to be made in the outworks of their empire; and not-

withstanding the reserve of prior right, have fered a dangerous exception to the prescri tenure of their American territories.

Such is the loss of Spain; let us now comp the profit of Britain. We have, by obtaining disavowal of Buccarelli's expidition, and a restit tion of our settlement, maintained the honour o the crown, and the superiority of our influence. Beyond this what have we acquired? What, but a bleak and gloomy solitude, an island thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter, and barren in summer; an island which not the southern savages have dignified with habitation: where a garrison must be kept in a state that contemplates with envy the exiles of Siberia; of which the expence will be perpetual, and the use only occasional; and which, if fortune smile upon our labours, may become a nest of smugglers in peace, and in war the refuge of future Buccaniers. To all this the government has now given ample attestation, for the island has been since abandoned, and perhaps was kept only to quiet clamours, with an intention, not then wholly concealed, of quitting it in a short time.

This is the country of which we have now possession, and of which a numerous party pretends to wish that we had murdered thousands for the titular sovereignty. To charge any men with such madness, approaches to an accusation defeated by its own incredibility. As they have been long accumulating falsehoods, it is possible that they are now only adding another to the heap, and that they do not mean all that they profess. But of this faction what evil may not be credited? They have

hitherto shewn no virtue, and very little wit, beyond that mischievous cunning for which it is held by Hale that children may be hanged.

As war is the last of remedies *cuncta prius tentanda*, all lawful expedients must be used to avoid it. As war is the extremity of evil, it is surely the duty of those whose station intrusts them with the care of nations, to avert it from their charge. There are diseases of animal nature which nothing but amputation can remove; so there may, by the depravation of human passions, be sometimes a gangrene in collective life for which fire and the sword are the necessary remedies; but in what can skill or caution be better shewn than preventing such dreadful operations, while there is yet room for gentler methods?

It is wonderful with what coolness and indifference the greater part of mankind see war commenced. Those that hear of it at a distance, or read of it in books, but have never presented its evils to their minds, consider it as little more than a splendid game, a proclamation, an army, a battle, and a triumph. Some indeed must perish in the most successful field, but they die upon the bed of honour, *resign their lives amidst the joys of conquest, and, filled with* England's *glory, smile in death.*

The life of a modern soldier is ill represented by heroick fiction. War has means of destruction more formidable than the cannon and the sword. Of the thousands and ten thousands that perished in our late contests with France and Spain, a very small part ever felt the stroke of an enemy; the rest languished in tents and ships, amidst damps

and putrefaction; pale, torpid, spiritless, and helpless; gasping and groaning, unpitied among men, made obdurate by long continuance of hopeless misery; and were at last whelmed in pits, or heaved into the ocean, without notice and without remembrance. By incommodious encampments and unwholesome stations, where courage is useless, and enterprise impracticable, fleets are silently dispeopled, and armies sluggishly melted away.

Thus is a people gradually exhausted, for the most part, with little effect. The wars of civilized nations make very slow changes in the system of empire. The publick perceives scarcely any alteration but an increase of debt; and the few individuals who are benefited, are not supposed to have the clearest right to their advantages. If he that shared the danger enjoyed the profit, and after bleeding in the battle grew rich by the victory, he might shew his gains without envy. But at the conclusion of a ten years war, how are we recompensed for the death of multitudes and the expence of millions, but by contemplating the sudden glories of paymasters and agents, contractors and commissaries, whose equipages shine like meteors, and whose palaces rise like exhalations.

These are the men who, without virtue, labour or hazard, are growing rich as their country is impoverished; they rejoice when obstinacy or ambition adds another year to slaughter and devastation; and laugh from their desks at bravery and science, while they are adding figure to figure, and cipher to cipher, hoping for a new contract from a new armament, and computing the profits of a siege or tempest.

Those who suffer their minds to dwell on these considerations will think it no great crime in the ministry that they have not snatched with eagerness the first opportunity of rushing into the field, when they were able to obtain by quiet negociation all the real good that victory could have brought us.

Of victory indeed every nation is confident before the sword is drawn; and this mutual confidence produces that wantonness of bloodshed that has so often desolated the world. But it is evident, that of contradictory opinions one must be wrong, and the history of mankind does not want examples that may teach caution to the daring, and moderation to the proud.

Let us not think our laurels blasted by condescending to inquire, whether we might not possibly grow rather less than greater by attacking Spain? Whether we should have to contend with Spain alone, whatever has been promised by our patriots, may very reasonably be doubted. A war declared for the empty sound of an ancient title to a Magellanick rock, would raise the indignation of the earth against us. These encroachers on the waste of nature, says our ally the Russian, if they succeed in their first effort of usurpation, will make war upon us for a title to Kamschatscha. These universal settlers, says our ally the Dane, will in a short time settle upon Greenland, and a fleet will batter Copenhagen, till we are willing to confess that it always was their own.

In a quarrel like this, it is not possible that any power should favour us, and it is very likely that

some would oppose us. The French, we are told, are otherwise employed; the contests between the king of France and his own subjects are sufficient to withhold him from supporting Spain. But who does not know that a foreign war has often put a stop to civil discords? It withdraws the attention of the publick from domestick grievances, and affords opportunities of dismissing the turbulent and restless to distant employments. The Spaniards have always an argument of irresistible persuasion. If France will not support them against England, they will strengthen England against France.

But let us indulge a dream of idle speculation, and suppose that we are to engage with Spain, and with Spain alone; it is not even yet very certain that much advantage will be gained. Spain is not easily vulnerable; her kingdom, by the loss or cession of many fragments of dominion, is become solid and compact. The Spaniards have indeed no fleet able to oppose us, but they will not endeavour actual opposition; they will shut themselves up in their own territories, and let us exhaust our seamen in a hopeless siege. They will give commissions to privateers of every nation, who will prey upon our merchants without possibility of reprisal. If they think their plate fleet in danger, they will forbid it to set sail, and live a while upon the credit of treasure which all Europe knows to be safe; and which, if our obstinacy should continue till they can no longer be without it, will be conveyed to them with secrecy and security by our natural enemies the French, or by the Dutch our natural allies.

But the whole continent of Spanish America will lie open to invasion; we shall have nothing to do but march into these wealthy regions, and make their present masters confess that they were always ours by ancient right. We shall throw brass and iron out of our houses, and nothing but silver will be seen among us.

All this is very desirable, but it is not certain that it can be easily attained. Large tracts of America were added by the last war to the British dominions; but, if the faction credit their own Apollo, they were conquered in Germany. They at best are only the barren parts of the continent, the refuse of the earlier adventurers, which the French, who came last, had taken only as better than nothing.

Against the Spanish dominions we have never hitherto been able to do much. A few privateers have grown rich at their expence, but no scheme of conquest has yet been successful. They are defended not by walls mounted with cannons which by cannons may be battered, but by the storms of the deep and the vapours of the land, by the flames of calenture and blasts of pestilence.

In the reign of Elizabeth, the favourite period of English greatness, no enterprises against America had any other consequence than that of extending English navigation. Here Cavendish perished after all his hazards; and here Drake and Hawkins, great as they were in knowledge and in fame, having promised honour to themselves and dominion to the country, sunk by desperation and misery in dishonourable graves.

During the protectorship of Cromwell, a time of which the patriotick tribes still more ardently desire the return, the Spanish dominions were again attempted; but here, and only here, the fortune of Cromwell made a pause. His forces were driven from Hispaniola, his hopes of possessing the West Indies vanished, and Jamaica was taken, only that the whole expedition might not grow ridiculous.

The attack of Carthagena is yet remembered, where the Spaniards from the ramparts saw their invaders destroyed by the hostility of the element; poisoned by the air, and crippled by the dews; where every hour swept away battalions; and in the three days that passed between the descent and re-embarkation, half an army perished.

In the last war the Havanna was taken, at what expence is too well remembered. May my country be never cursed with such another conquest!

These instances of miscarriage, and these arguments of difficulty, may perhaps abate the military ardour of the Publick. Upon the opponents of the government their operation will be different; they wish for war, but not for conquest; victory would defeat their purposes equally with peace, because prosperity would naturally continue trust in those hands which had used it fortunately. The patriots gratified themselves with expectations that some sinistrous accident, or erroneous conduct, might diffuse discontent and inflame malignity. Their hope is malevolence, and their good is evil.

Of their zeal for their country we have already had a specimen. While they were terrifying the

nation with doubts whether it was any longer to exist; while they represented invasive armies as hovering in the clouds, and hostile fleets as emerging from the deeps; they obstructed our levies of seamen, and embarrassed our endeavours of defence. Of such men he thinks with unnecessary candour, who does not believe them likely to have promoted the miscarriage which they desired, by intimidating our troops, or betraying our counsels.

It is considered as an injury to the publick by those sanguinary statesmen, that though the fleet has been refitted and manned, yet no hostilities have followed; and they who sat wishing for misery and slaughter are disappointed of their pleasure. But as peace is the end of war, it is the end likewise of preparations for war; and he may be justly hunted down as the enemy of mankind, that can choose to snatch by violence and bloodshed, what gentler means can equally obtain.

The ministry are reproached as not daring to provoke an enemy, lest ill success should discredit and displace them. I hope that they had better reasons; that they paid some regard to equity and humanity; and considered themselves as entrusted with the safety of their fellow-subjects, and as the destroyers of all that should be superfluously slaughtered. But let us suppose that their own safety had some influence on their conduct, they will not, however, sink to a level with their enemies. Though the motive might be selfish, the act was innocent. They who grow rich by administering physick, are not to be numbered with them that get money by dispensing poison. If

they maintain power by harmlessness and peace, they must for ever be at a great distance from ruffians who would gain it by mischief and confusion. The watch of a city may guard it for hire; but are well employed in protecting it from those who lie in wait to fire the streets and rob the houses amidst the conflagration.

An unsuccessful war would undoubtedly have had the effect which the enemies of the ministry so earnestly desire; for who could have sustained the disgrace of folly ending in misfortune? But had wanton invasion undeservedly prospered, had Falkland's Island been yielded unconditionally with every right prior and posterior; though the rabble might have shouted, and the windows have blazed, yet those who know the value of life, and the uncertainty of publick credit, would have murmured, perhaps unheard, at the increase of our debt and the loss of our people.

This thirst of blood, however the visible promoters of sedition may think it convenient to shrink from the accusation, is loudly avowed by Junius, the writer to whom his party owes much of its pride, and some of its popularity. Of Junius it cannot be said, as of Ulysses, that he scatters ambiguous expressions among the vulgar; for he cries *havock* without reserve, and endeavours to let slip the dogs of foreign or of civil war, ignorant whither they are going, and careless what may be their prey.

Junius has sometimes made his satire felt, but let not injudicious admiration mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow. He has some-

times sported with lucky malice; but to him that knows his company, it is not hard to be sarcastick in a mask. While he walks, like Jack the Giant-killer, in a coat of darkness, he may do much mischief with little strength. Novelty captivates the superficial and thoughtless; vehemence delights the discontented and turbulent. He that contradicts acknowledged truth, will always have an audience; he that vilifies established authority will always find abettors.

Junius burst into notice with a blaze of impudence which has rarely glared upon the world before, and drew the rabble after him as a monster makes a show. When he had once provided for his safety by impenetrable secrecy, he had nothing to combat but truth and justice, enemies whom he knows to be feeble in the dark. Being then at liberty to indulge himself in all the immunities of invisibility; out of the reach of danger, he has been bold; out of the reach of shame, he has been confident. As a rhetorician, he has had the art of persuading when he seconded desire; as a reasoner, he has convinced those who had no doubt before; as a moralist, he has taught that virtue may disgrace; and as a patriot, he has gratified the mean by insults on the high. Finding sedition ascendant, he has been able to advance it; finding the nation combustible, he has been able to inflame it. Let us abstract from his wit the vivacity of insolence, and withdraw from his efficacy the sympathetick favour of plebeian malignity; I do not say that we shall leave him nothing; the cause that I defend scorns the help of falsehood; but if we leave him only his merit, what will be his praise?

It is not by his liveliness of imagery, his pungency of periods, or his fertility of allusion, that he detains the cits of London, and the boors of Middlesex. Of style and sentiment they take no cognizance. They admire him for virtues like their own, for contempt of order and violence of outrage, for rage of defamation and audacity of falsehood. The supporters of the Bill of Rights feel no niceties of composition, nor dexterities of sophistry; their faculties are better proportioned to the bawl of Bellas, or barbarity of Beckford; but they are told that Junius is on their side, and they are therefore sure that Junius is infallible. Those who know not whether he would lead them, resolve to follow him; and those who cannot find his meaning, hope he means rebellion.

Junius is an unusual phænomenon, on which some have gazed with wonder and some with terror, but wonder and terror are transitory passions. He will soon be more closely viewed or more attentively examined, and what folly has taken for a comet that from its flaming hair shook pestilence and war, inquiry will find to be only a meteor formed by the vapours of putrefying democracy, and kindled into flame by the effervescence of interest struggling with conviction; which after having plunged its followers in a bog, will leave us inquiring why we regard it

Yet though I cannot think the style of Junius secure from criticism, though his expressions are trite, and his periods feeble, I should never have stationed him where he has placed himself, had I not rated him by his morals rather than his facul-

ties. What, says Pope, must be the priest, where a monkey is the god? What must be the drudge of a party of which the heads are Wilkes and Crosby, Sawbridge and Townsend?

Junius knows his own meaning, and can therefore tell it. He is an enemy to the ministry, he sees them growing hourly stronger. He knows that a war at once unjust and unsuccesful would have certainly displaced them; and is therefore, in his zeal for his country, angry that war was not unjustly made, and unsuccesfully conducted. But there are others whose thoughts are less clearly expressed, and whose schemes perhaps are less consequentially digested; who declare that they do not wish for a rupture, yet condemn the ministry for not doing that, by which a rupture would naturally have been made.

If one party resolves to demand what the other resolves to refuse, the dispute can be determined only by arbitration; and between powers who have no common superior, there is no other arbitrator than the sword.

Whether the ministry might not equitably have demanded more, is not worth a question. The utmost exertion of right is always invidious, and where claims are not easily determinable is always dangerous. We asked all that was necessary; and persisted in our first claim without mean recession, or wanton aggravation. The Spaniards found us resolute, and complied after a short struggle.

The real crime of the ministry is, that they have found the means of avoiding their own ruin; but the charge against them is multifarious and con-

fused, as will happen, when malice and discontent are ashamed of their complaint. The past and the future are complicated in the censure. We have heard a tumultuous clamour about honour and rights, injuries and insults, the British flag, and the Favourite's rudder, Buccarelli's conduct, and Grimaldi's declarations, the Manilla ransom, delays and reparation.

Through the whole argument of the faction runs the general error, that our settlement on Falkland's Island was not only lawful but unquestionable; that our right was not only certain but acknowledged; and that the equity of our conduct was such, that the Spaniards could not blame or obstruct it without combating their own conviction, and opposing the general opinion of mankind.

If once it be discovered that, in the opinion of the Spaniards, our settlement was usurped, our claim arbitrary, and our conduct insolent, all that has happened will appear to follow by a natural concatenation. Doubts will produce disputes and disquisition, disquisition requires delay, and delay causes inconvenience.

Had the Spanish government immediately yielded unconditionally all that was required, we might have been satisfied; but what would Europe have judged of their submission? that they shrunk before us as a conquered people, who having lately yielded to our arms, were now compelled to sacrifice to our pride. The honour of the Publick is indeed of high importance; but we must remember that we have had to transact with a mighty king

and a powerful nation, who have unluckily been taught to think that they have honour to keep or lose as well as ourselves.

When the Admiralty were told in June of the warning given to Hunt, they were, I suppose, informed that Hunt had first provoked it by warning away the Spaniards, and naturally considered one act of insolence as balanced by another, without expecting that more would be done on either side. Of representations and remonstrances there would be no end, if they were to be made whenever small commanders are uncivil to each other; nor could peace ever be enjoyed, if upon such transient provocations it be imagined necessary to prepare for war. We might then, it is said, have increased our force with more leisure and less inconvenience; but this is to judge only by the event. We omitted to disturb the Publick, because we did not suppose that an armament would be necessary.

Some months afterwards, as has been told, Buccarelli, the governor of Buenos Ayres, sent against the settlement of Port Egmont a force which ensured the conquest. The Spanish commander required the English captains to depart, but they thinking that resistance necessary which they knew to be useless, gave the Spaniards the right of prescribing terms of capitulation. The Spaniards imposed no new condition, except that the sloop should not sail under twenty days; and of this they secured the performance by taking off the rudder.

To an inhabitant of the land there appears nothing in all this unreasonable or offensive. If the

English intended to keep their stipulation, how were they injured by the detention of the rudder? If the rudder be to a ship what his tail is in fables to a fox, the part in which honour is placed, and of which the violation is never to be endured, I am sorry that the *Favourite* suffered an indignity, but cannot yet think it a cause for which nations should slaughter one another.

When Buccarelli's invasion was known, and the dignity of the crown infringed, we demanded reparation and prepared for war, and we gained equal respect by the moderation of our terms, and the spirit of our exertion. The Spanish minister immediately denied that Buccarelli had received any particular orders to sieze Port Egmont, nor pretended that he was justified, otherwise than by the general instructions by which the American governors are required to exclude the subjects of other powers.

To have inquired whether our settlement at Port Egmont was any violation of the Spanish rights, had been to enter upon a discussion which the pertinacity of political disputants might have continued without end. We therefore called for restitution, not as a confession of right, but as a reparation of honour, which required that we should be restored to our former state upon the island, and that the king of Spain should disavow the action of his governor.

In return to this demand, the Spaniards expected from us a disavowal of the menaces with which they had been first insulted by Hunt; and if the claim to the island be supposed doubtful, they cer-

tainly expected it with equal reason. This, however, was refused, and our superiority of strength gave validity to our arguments.

But we are told that the disavowal of the king of Spain is temporary and fallacious; that Buccarelli's armament had all the appearance of regular forces and a concerted expedition; and that he is not treated at home as a man guilty of piracy, or as disobedient to the orders of his master.

That the expedition was well planned, and the forces properly supplied, affords no proof of communication between the governor and his court. Those who are entrusted with the care of kingdoms in another hemisphere, must always be trusted with power to defend them.

As little can be inferred from his reception at the Spanish court. He is not punished indeed, for what has he done that deserves punishment? He was sent into America to govern and defend the dominions of Spain. He thought the English were encroaching, and drove them away. No Spaniard thinks that he has exceeded his duty, nor does the king of Spain charge him with excess. The boundaries of dominion in that part of the world have not yet been settled; and he mistook, if a mistake there was, like a zealous subject, in his master's favour.

But all this inquiry is superfluous. Considered as a reparation of honour, the disavowal of the king of Spain, made in the sight of all Europe, is of equal value, whether true or false. There is indeed no reason to question its veracity; they, however, who do not believe it, must

allow the weight of that influence by which a great prince is reduced to disown his own commission.

But the general orders upon which the governor is acknowledged to have acted, are neither disavowed nor explained. Why the Spaniards should disavow the defence of their own territories, the warmest disputant will find it difficult to tell; and if by an explanation is meant an accurate delineation of the southren empire, and the limitation of their claims beyond the line, it cannot be imputed to any very culpable remissness, that what has been denied for two centuries to the European powers, was not obtained in a hasty wrangle about a petty settlement.

The ministry were too well acquainted with negociation to fill their heads with such idle expectations. The question of right was inexplicable and endless. They left it as it stood. To be restored to actual possession was easily practicable. This restoration they required and obtained.

But they should, say their opponents, have insisted upon more; they should have exacted not only reparation of our honour but repayment of our expence. Nor are they all satisfied with the recovery of the costs and damages of the present contest; they are for taking this opportunity of calling in old debts, and reviving our right to the ransom of Manilla.

The Manilla ransom has, I think, been most mentioned by the inferior bellowers of seditition. Those who lead the faction know that it cannot

be remembered much to their advantage. The followers of Lord Rockingham remember that his ministry began and ended without obtaining it; the adherents to Grenville would be told, that he could never be taught to understand our claim. The law of nations made little of his knowledge. Let him not, however, be depreciated in his grave. If he was sometimes wrong, he was often right.

Of reimbursement the talk has been more confident, though not more reasonable. The expences of war have been often desired, have been sometimes required, but were never paid; or never, but when resistance was hopeless, and there remained no choice between submission and destruction.

Of our late equipments I know not from whom the charge can be very properly expected. The king of Spain disavows the violence which provoked us to arm, and for the mischiefs which he did not do, why should he pay? Buccarelli, though he had learned all the arts of an East-Indian governor, could hardly have collected at Buenos Ayres a sum sufficient to satisfy our demands. If he be honest, he is hardly rich; and if he be disposed to rob, he has the misfortune of being placed where robbers have been before him.

The king of Spain indeed delayed to comply with our proposals, and our armament was made necessary by unsatisfactory answers and dilatory debates. The delay certainly increased our expences, and it is not unlikely that the increase of our expences put an end to the delay.

But this is the inevitable process of human affairs. Negociation requires time. What is not apparent to intuition must be found by inquiry. Claims that have remained doubtful for ages cannot be settled in a day. Reciprocal complaints are not easily adjusted but by reciprocal compliance. The Spaniards, thinking themselves entitled to the island, and injured by Captain Hunt, in their turn demanded satisfaction, which was refused; and where is the wonder if their concessions were delayed! They may tell us, that an independent nation is to be influenced not by command, but by persuasion; that if we expect our proposals to be received without deliberation, we assume that sovereignty which they do not grant us; and that if we arm while they are deliberating, we must indulge our martial ardour at our own charge.

The English ministry asked all that was reasonable, and enforced all that they asked. Our national honour is advanced, and our interest, if any interest we have, is sufficiently secured. There can be none amongst us to whom this transaction does not seem happily concluded, but those who, having fixed their hopes on publick calamities, sat like vultures waiting for a day of carnage. Having worn out all the arts of domestick sedition, having wearied violence, and exhausted falsehood, they yet flattered themselves with some assistance from the pride or malice of Spain; and when they could no longer make the people complain of grievances which they did not feel, they had the comfort yet of knowing that real evils

were possible, and their resolution is well known of charging all evil on their governors.

The reconciliation was therefore considered as the loss of their last anchor; and received not only with the fretfulness of disappointment but the rage of desperation. When they found that all were happy in spite of their machinations, and the soft effulgence of peace shone out upon the nation, they felt no motion but that of sullen envy; they could not, like Milton's prince of hell, abstract themselves a moment from their evil; as they have not the wit of Satan, they have not his virtue; they tried once again what could be done by sophistry without art, and confidence without credit. They represented their sovereign as dishonoured, and their country as betrayed, or, in their fiercer paroxysms of fury, reviled their sovereign as betraying it.

Their pretences I have here endeavoured to expose, by showing that more than has been yielded was not to be expected, that more perhaps was not to be desired, and that if all had been refused, there had scarcely been an adequate reason for a war.

There was perhaps never much danger of war or of refusal, but what danger there was, proceeded from the faction. Foreign nations, unacquainted with the insolence of common councils, and unaccustomed to the howl of plebeian patriotism, when they heard of rabbles and riots, of petitions and remonstrances, of discontent in Surrey, Derbyshire, and Yorkshire, when they saw the chain of subordination broken, and the legislature threat-

ened and defied, naturally imagined that such a government had little leisure for Falkland's Island; they supposed that the English, when they returned ejected from Port Egmont, would find Wilkes invested with the protectorate; or see the Mayor of London, what the French have formerly seen their mayors of the palace, the commander of the army and tutor of the king; that they would be called to tell their tale before the Common Council; and that the world was to expect war or peace from a vote of the subscribers to the Bill of Rights.

But our enemies have now lost their hopes, and our friends I hope are recovered from their fears. To fancy that our government can be subverted by the rabble, whom its lenity has pampered into impudence, is to fear that a city may be drowned by the overflowing of its kennels. The distemper which cowardice or malice thought either decay of the vitals, or resolution of the nerves, appears at last to have been nothing more than a political *phthiriasis*, a disease too loathsome for a plainer name; but the effect of negligence rather than of weakness, and of which the shame is greater than the danger.

Among the disturbers of our quiet are some animals of greater bulk, whom their power of roaring persuaded us to think formidable, but we now perceive that sound and force do not always go together. The noise of a savage proves nothing but his hunger.

After all our broils, foreign and domestick, we may at last hope to remain a while in quiet, amu-

sed with the view of our own success. We have gained political strength by the increase of our reputation; we have gained real strength by the reparation of our navy; we have shewn Europe that ten years of war have not yet exhausted us; and we have enforced our settlement on an island on which twenty years ago we durst not venture to look.

These are the gratifications only of honest minds; but there is a time in which hope comes to all. From the present happiness of the Publick, the patriots themselves may derive advantage. To be harmless, though by impotence, obtains some degree of kindness; no man hates a worm as he hates a viper; they were once dreaded enough to be detested, as serpents that could bite; they have now shewn that they can only hiss, and may therefore quietly slink into holes, and change their slough unmolested and forgotten.

THE

PATRIOT.

ADDRESSED TO THE

ELECTORS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

[1774.]

They bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
Yet still revolt when truth would set them free;
Licence they mean, when they cry liberty,
For who loves that must first be wise and good.
MILTON.

TO improve the golden moment of opportunity, and catch the good that is within our reach, is the great art of life. Many wants are suffered, which might once have been supplied; and much time is lost in regretting the time which had been lost before.

At the end of every seven years comes the Saturnalian season, when the freemen of Great Britain may please themselves with the choice of their representatives. This happy day has now arrived, somewhat sooner than it could be claimed.

To select and depute those, by whom laws are to be made, and taxes to be granted, is a high dignity and an important trust: and it is the business of every elector to consider, how this dignity may be well sustained, and this trust faithfully discharged.

It ought to be deeply impressed on the minds of all who have voices in this national deliberation, that no man can deserve a seat in Parliament who is not a PATRIOT. No other man will protect our rights, no other man can merit our confidence.

A *patriot* is he whose publick conduct is regulated by one single motive, the love of his country; who, as an agent in Parliament, has for himself neither hope nor fear, neither kindness nor resentment, but refers every thing to the common interest.

That of five hundred men, such as this degenerate age affords, a majority can be found thus virtuously abstracted, who will affirm? Yet there is no good in despondence: vigilance and activity often effect more than was expected. Let us take a patriot where we can meet him; and that we may not flatter ourselves by false appearances, distinguish those marks which are certain from those which may deceive: for a man may have the external appearance of a patriot, without the constituent qualities; as false coins have often lustre, though they want weight.

Some claim a place in the list of Patriots by an acrimonious and unremitting opposition to the Court.

This mark is by no means infallible. Patriotism is not necessarily included in rebellion. A man

may hate his king, yet not love his country. He that has been refused a reasonable or unreasonable request, who thinks his merit under-rated, and sees his influence declining, begins soon to talk of natural equality, the absurdity of *many made for one*, the original compact, the foundation of authority, and the majesty of the people. As his political melancholy increases, he tells, and perhaps dreams, of the advances of the prerogative, and the dangers of arbitrary power; yet his design in all his declamation is not to benefit his country, but to gratify his malice.

These, however, are the most honest of the opponents of government; their patriotism is a species of disease; and they feel some part of what they express. But the greater, far the greater number of those who rave and rail, and inquire and accuse, neither suspect nor fear, nor care for the publick; but hope to force their way to riches by virulence and invective, and are vehement and clamorous, only that they may be sooner hired to be silent. A man sometimes starts up a patriot, only by disseminating discontent and propagating reports of secret influence, of dangerous counsels, of violated rights, and encroaching usurpation.

This practice is no certain note of patriotism. To instigate the populace with rage beyond the provocation, is to suspend public happiness, if not to destroy it. He is no lover of his country, that unnecessarily disturbs its peace. Few errors, and few faults of government, can justify an appeal to the rabble; who ought not to judge of what they cannot understand, and whose opinions are not propagated by reason, but caught by contagion.

The fallaciousness of this note of patriotism is particularly apparent, when the clamour continues after the evil is past. They who are still filling our ears with Mr Wilkes, and the freeholders of Middlesex, lament a grievance that is now at an end. Mr Wilkes may be chosen, if any will choose him, and the precedent of his exclusion makes not any honest, or any decent man, think himself in danger.

It may be doubted whether the name of a patriot can be fairly given as the reward of secret satire, or open outrage. To fill the news-papers with sly hints of corruption and intrigue, to circulate the *Middlesex Journal* and *London Pacquet*, may indeed be zeal; but it may likewise be interest and malice. To offer a petition, not expected to be granted; to insult a king with a rude remonstrance, only because there is no punishment for legal insolence, is not courage, for there is no danger; nor patriotism, for it tends to the subversion of order, and lets wickedness loose upon the land, by destroying the reverence due to sovereign authority.

It is the quality of patriotism to be jealous and watchful, to observe all secret machinations, and to see public dangers at a distance. The true *lover of his country* is ready to communicate his fears, and to sound the alarm, whenever he perceives the approach of mischief. But he sounds no alarm, when there is no enemy: he never terrifies his countrymen till he is terrified himself. The patriotism, therefore, may be justly doubted of him, who professes to be disturbed by incredibilities; who tells, that the last peace was obtained by

bribing the Princess of Wales; that the King is grasping at arbitrary power; and that because the French in the new conquests enjoy their own laws, there is a design at Court of abolishing in England the trial by juries.

Still less does the true patriot circulate opinions which he knows to be false. No man, who loves his country, fills the nation with clamorous complaints, that the Protestant religion is in danger, because *popery is established in the extensive province of Quebec*, a falsehood so open and shameless, that it can need no confutation among those who know that of which it is almost impossible for the most unenlightened zealot to be ignorant,

That Quebec is on the other side of the Atlantick, at too great a distance to do much good or harm to the European world:

That the inhabitants, being French, were always Papists, who are certainly more dangerous as enemies than as subjects:

That though the province be wide, the people are few, probably not so many as may be found in one of the larger English counties:

That persecution is not more virtuous in a Protestant than a Papist; and that, while we blame Lewis the Fourteenth for his dragoons and his gallies, we ought, when power comes into our hands, to use it with greater equity:

That when Canada with its inhabitants was yielded, the free enjoyment of their religion was stipulated; a condition, of which King William, who was no propagator of Popery, gave an example nearer home, at the surrender of Limerick:

That in an age, where every mouth is open for *liberty of conscience*, it is equitable to shew some regard to the conscience of a Papist, who may be supposed, like other men, to think himself safest in his own religion; and that those at least, who enjoy a toleration, ought not to deny it to our new subjects.

If liberty of conscience be a natural right, we have no power to withhold it; if it be an indulgence, it may be allowed to Papists, while it is not denied to other sects.

A patriot is necessarily and invariably a lover of the people. But even this mark may sometimes deceive us.

The people is a very heterogeneous and confused mass of the wealthy and the poor, the wise and the foolish, the good and the bad. Before we confer on a man, who caresses the people, the title of patriot, we must examine to what part of the people he directs his notice. It is proverbially said, that he who dissembles his own character, may be known by that of his companions. If the candidate of patriotism endeavours to infuse right opinions into the higher ranks, and by their influence to regulate the lower; if he consorts chiefly with the wise, the temperate, the regular, and the virtuous, his love of the people may be rational and honest. But if his first or principal application be to the indigent, who are always inflammable; to the weak, who are naturally suspicious; to the ignorant, who are easily misled; and to the profligate, who have no hope but from mischief and confusion; let his love of the people be no longer boasted. No man can reasonably be thought a

lover of his country, for roasting an ox, or burning a boot, or attending the meeting at Mile End, or registering his name in the Lumber Troop. He may, among the drunkards, be a *hearty fellow*, and among sober handicraftsmen, a *free-spoken gentleman;* but he must have some better distinction before he is a *patriot*.

A patriot is always ready to countenance the just claims, and animate the reasonable hopes of the people; he reminds them frequently of their rights, and stimulates them to resent encroachments, and to multiply securities.

But all this may be done in appearance, without real patriotism. He that raises false hopes to serve a present purpose, only makes a way for disappointment and discontent. He who promises to endeavour, what he knows his endeavours unable to effect, means only to delude his followers by an empty clamour of ineffectual zeal.

A true patriot is no lavish promiser: he undertakes not to shorten Parliaments; to repeal laws; or to change the mode of representation, transmitted by our ancestors: he knows that futurity is not in his power, and that all times are not alike favourable to change.

Much less does he make a vague and indefinite promise of obeying the mandates of his constituents. He knows the prejudices of faction, and the inconstancy of the multitude. He would first inquire, how the opinion of his constituents shall be taken. Popular instructions are commonly the work, not of the wise and steady, but the violent and rash; meetings held for directing representatives are seldom attended but by the idle and the

dissolute; and he is not without suspicion, that of his constituents, as of other numbers of men, the smaller part may often be the wiser.

He considers himself as deputed to promote the publick good, and to preserve his constituents, with the rest of his countrymen, not only from being hurt by others, but from hurting themselves.

The common marks of patriotism having been examined, and shewn to be such as artifice may counterfeit, or folly misapply, it cannot be improper to consider, whether there are not some characteristical modes of speaking or acting, which may prove a man to be *not a patriot*.

In this inquiry, perhaps clearer evidence may be discovered, and firmer persuasion attained; for it is commonly easier to know what is wrong than what is right; to find what we should avoid, than what we should pursue.

As war is one of the heaviest of national evils, a calamity in which every species of misery is involved; as it sets the general safety to hazard, suspends commerce, and desolates the country; as it exposes great numbers to hardships, dangers, captivity, and death; no man, who desires the publick prosperity, will inflame general resentment by aggravating minute injuries, or enforcing disputable rights of little importance.

It may therefore be safely pronounced, that those men are no patriots, who when the national honour was vindicated in the sight of Europe, and the Spaniards, having invaded what they call their own, had shrunk to a disavowal of their attempt, and a relaxation of their claim, would still have in-

stigated us to a war for a bleak and barren spot in the Magellanick ocean, of which no use could be made, unless it were a place of exile for the hypocrites of patriotism.

Yet let it not be forgotten, that by the howling violence of patriotick rage the nation was for a time exasperated to such madness, that for a barren rock, under a stormy sky, we might have now been fighting and dying, had not our competitors been wiser than ourselves; and those who are now courting the favour of the people by noisy professions of publick spirit, would, while they were counting the profits of their artifice, have enjoyed the patriotick pleasure of hearing sometimes, that thousands had been slaughtered in a battle, and sometimes that a navy had been dispeopled by poisoned air and corrupted food.

He that wishes to see his country robbed of its rights, cannot be a patriot.

That man therefore is no patriot, who justifies the ridiculous claims of American usurpation; who endeavours to deprive the nation of its natural and lawful authority over its own colonies; those colonies, which were settled under English protection, were constituted by an English charter; and have been defended by English arms.

To suppose, that by sending out a colony, the nation established an independent power; that when, by indulgence and favour, emigrants are become rich, they shall not contribute to their own defence, but at their own pleasure; and that they shall not be included, like millions of their fellow-subjects, in the general system of representation;

involves such an accumulation of absurdity, as nothing but the show of patriotism could palliate.

He that accepts protection, stipulates obedience. We have always protected the Americans; we may therefore subject them to government.

The less is included in the greater. That power which can take away life, may seize upon property. The parliament may enact for America a law of capital punisment; it may therefore establish a mode and proportion of taxation.

But there are some who lament the state of the poor *Bostonians*, because they cannot all be supposed to have committed acts of rebellion, yet all are involved in the penalty imposed. This, they say, is to violate the first rule of justice, by condemning the innocent to suffer with the guilty.

This deserves some notice, as it seems dictated by equity and humanity, however it may raise contempt by the ignorance which it betrays of the state of man, and the system of things. That the innocent should be confounded with the guilty, is undoudtedly an evil; but it is an evil which no care or caution can prevent. National crimes require national punishments, of which many must necessarily have their part, who have not incurred them by personal guilt. If rebels should fortify a town, the cannon of lawful authority will endanger equally the harmless burghers and the criminal garrison.

In some cases, those suffer most who are least intended to be hurt. If the French in the late war had taken an English city, and permitted the natives to keep their dwellings, how could it have been recovered, but by the slaughter of our

friends? A bomb might as well destroy an Englishman as a Frenchman; and by famine we know that the inhabitants would be the first that should perish.

This infliction of promiscuous evil may therefore be lamented, but cannot be blamed. The power of lawful government must be maintained; and the miseries which rebellion produces, can be charged only on the rebels.

That man likewise is *not a Patriot*, who denies his governors their due praise, and who conceals from the people the benefits which they receive. Those therefore can lay no claim to this illustrious appellation, who impute want of publick spirit to the late parliament; ana ssembly of men, whom, notwithstanding some fluctuation of counsel, and some weakness of agency, the nation must always remember with gratitude, since it is indebted to them for a very ample concession in the resignation of protections, and a wise and honest attempt to improve the constitution, in the new judicature instituted for the trial of elections.

The right of protection, which might be necessary when it was first claimed, and was very consistent with that liberality of immunities in which the feudal constitution delighted, was by its nature liable to abuse, and had in reality been sometimes misapplied, to the evasion of the law, and the defeat of justice. The evil was perhaps not adequate to the clamour; nor is it very certain, that the possible good of this privilege was not more than equal to the possible evil. It is however plain, that whether they gave any thing or not to the Publick, they at least lost something

from themselves. They divested their dignity of a very splendid distinction, and shewed that they were more willing than their predecessors to stand on a level with their fellow-subjects.

The new mode of trying elections, if it be found effectual, will diffuse its consequences further than seems yet to be foreseen. It is, I believe, generally considered as advantageous only to those who claim seats in parliament; but, if to choose representatives be one of the most valuable rights of Englishmen, every voter must consider that law as adding to his happiness, which makes his suffrage efficacious; since it was vain to choose, while the election could be controlled by any other power.

With what imperious contempt of ancient rights, and what audaciousness of arbitrary authority former parliaments have judged the disputes about elections, it is not necessary to relate. The claim of a candidate, and the right of electors, are said scarcely to have been, even in appearance, referred to conscience; but to have been decided by party, by passion, by prejudice, or by frolick. To have friends in the borough was of little use to him, who wanted friends in the House; a pretence was easily found to evade a majority, and the seat was at last his, that was chosen not by his electors, but his fellow-senators.

Thus the nation was insulted with a mock election, and the parliament was filled with spurious representatives; one of the most important claims, that of right to sit in the supreme council of the kingdom, was debated in jest, and no man could be confident of success from the justice of his cause.

A disputed election is now tried with the same scrupulousness and solemnity, as any other title. The candidate that has deserved well of his neighbours, may now be certain of enjoying the effect of their approbation; and the elector, who has voted honestly for known merit, may be certain that he has not voted in vain.

Such was the parliament, which some of those, who are now aspiring to sit in another, have taught the rabble to consider as an unlawful convention of men, worthless, venal, and prostitute, slaves of the court, and tyrants of the people.

That the next House of Commons may act upon the principles of the last, with more constancy and higher spirit, must be the wish of all who wish well to the Publick; and it is surely not too much to expect, that the nation will recover from its delusion, and unite in a generalabhorrence of those who, by deceiving the credulous with fictitious mischiefs, overbearing the weak by audacity of falsehood, by appealing to the judgment of ignorance, and flattering the vanity of meanness, by slandering honesty and insulting dignity, have gathered round them whatever the kingdom can supply of base, and gross, and profligate; and *raised by merit to this bad eminence*, arrogate to themselves the name of PATRIOTS.

TAXATION NO TYRANNY;

AN

ANSWER

TO

THE RESOLUTIONS AND ADDRESS

OF THE

AMERICAN CONGRESS.

[1775.]

IN all the parts of human knowledge, whether terminating in science merely speculative, or operating upon life private or civil, are admitted some fundamental principles, or common axioms, which being generally received are little doubted, and being little doubted have been rarely proved.

Of these gratuitous and acknowledged truths it is often the fate to become less evident by endeavours to explain them, however necessary such endeavours may be made by the misapprehensions of absurdity, or the sophistries of interest. It is difficult to prove the principles of science, because no-

tions cannot always be found more intelligible than those which are questioned. It is difficult to prove the principles of practice, because they have for the most part not been discovered by investigation, but obtruded by experience; and the demonstrator will find, after an operose deduction, that he has been trying to make that seen which can be only felt.

Of this kind is the position, that *the supreme power of every community has the right of requiring from all its subjects, such contributions as are necessary to the publick safety or publick prosperity*, which was considered by all mankind as comprising the primary and essential condition of all political society, till it became disputed by those zealots of anarchy, who have denied to the parliament of Britain the right of taxing the American Colonies.

In favour of this exemption of the Americans from the authority of their lawful sovereign, and the dominion of their mother-country, very loud clamours have been raised, and many wild assertions advanced, which by such as borrow their opinions from the reigning fashion have been admitted as arguments; and what is strange, though their tendency is to lessen English honour, and English power, have been heard by Englishmen with a wish to find them true. Passion has in its first violence controlled interest, as the eddy for a while runs against the stream.

To be prejudiced is always to be weak; yet there are prejudices so near to laudable, that they have been often praised, and are always pardoned. To love their country has been considered as virtue in men, whose love could not be otherwise than blind,

because their preference was made without a comparison; but it has never been my fortune to find, either in ancient or modern writers, any honourable mention of those, who have with equal blindness hated their country.

These anti-patriotick prejudices are the abortions of folly impregnated by faction, which being produced against the standing order of nature, have not strength sufficient for long life. They are born only to scream and perish, and leave those to contempt or detestation, whose kindness was employed to nurse them into mischief.

To perplex the opinion of the Publick many artifices have been used, which, as usually happens when falsehood is to be maintained by fraud, lose their force by counteracting one another.

The nation is sometimes to be molified by a tender tale of men, who fled from tyranny to rocks and deserts, and is persuaded to lose all claims of justice, and all sense of dignity, in compassion for a harmless people, who having worked hard for bread in a wild country, and obtained by the slow progression of manual industry the accommodations of life, are now invaded by unprecedented oppression, and plundered of their properties by the harpies of taxation.

We are told how their industry is obstructed by unnatural restraints, and their trade confined by rigorous prohibitions; how they are forbidden to enjoy the products of their own soil, to manufacture the materials which nature spreads before them, or to carry their own goods to the nearest market: and surely the generosity of English virtue will never heap new weight upon those that are already

overladen; will never delight in that dominion, which cannot be exercised but by cruelty and outrage.

But while we are melting in silent sorrow, and in the transports of delirious pity dropping both the sword and balance from our hands, another friend of the Americans thinks it better to awaken another passion, and tries to alarm our interest, or excite our veneration, by accounts of their greatness and their opulence, of the fertility of their land, and the splendour of their towns. We then begin to consider the question with more evenness of mind, are ready to conclude that those restrictions are not very oppressive which have been found consistent with this speedy growth of prosperity; and begin to think it reasonable that they, who thus flourish under the protection of our government, should contribute something towards its expence.

But we are soon told that the Americans, however wealthy, cannot be taxed; that they are the descendants of men who left all for liberty, and that they have constantly preserved the principles and stubborness of their progenitors; that they are too obstinate for persuasion, and too powerful for constraint; that they will laugh at argument, and defeat violence; that the continent of North America contains three millions, not of men merely, but of Whigs, of Whigs fierce for liberty, and disdainful of dominion; that they multiply with the fecundity of their own rattlesnakes, so that every quarter of a century doubles their numbers.

Men accustomed to think themselves masters do not love to be threatened. This talk is, I hope, commonly thrown away, or raises passions different from those which it was intended to excite. Instead of terrifying the English hearer to tame acquiescence, it disposes him to hasten the experiment of bending obstinacy before it is become yet more obdurate, and convinces him that it is necessary to attack a nation thus prolific while we may yet hope to prevail. When he is told through what extent of territory we must travel to subdue them, he recollects how far, a few years ago, we travelled in their defence. When it is urged that they will shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed.

Nothing dejects a trader like the interruption of his profits. A commercial people, however magnanimous, shrinks at the thought of declining traffick, and an unfavourable balance. The effect of this terror has been tried. We have been stunned with the importance of our American commerce, and heard of merchants with warehouses that are never to be emptied, and of manufacturers starving for want of work.

That our commerce with America is profitable, however less than ostentatious or deceitful estimates have made it, and that it is our interest to preserve it, has never been denied; but surely it will most effectually be preserved, by being kept always in our own power. Concessions may promote it for a moment, but superiority only can ensure its continuance. There will always be a part, and always a very large part of every community that have no care but for themselves, and

whose care for themselves reaches little farther than impatience of immediate pain, and eagerness for the nearest good. The blind are said to feel with peculiar nicety. They who look but little into futurity, have perhaps the quickest sensation of the present. A merchant's desire is not of glory, but of gain; not of publick wealth, but of private emolument; he is therefore rarely to be consulted about war and peace, or any designs of wide extent and distant consequence.

Yet this, like other general characters, will sometimes fail. The traders of Birmingham have rescued themselves from all imputation of narrow selfishness by a manly recommendation to parliament of the rights and dignity of their native country.

To these men I do not intend to ascribe an absurd and enthusiastick contempt of interest, but to give them the rational and just praise of distinguishing real from seeming good, of being able to see through the cloud of interposing difficulties, to the lasting and solid happiness of victory and settlement.

Lest all these topicks of persuasion should fail, the greater actor of patriotism has tried another, in which terror and pity are happily combined, not without a proper superaddition of that admiration which later ages have brought into the drama. The heroes of Boston, he tells us, if the stamp-act had not been repealed, would have left their town, their port, and their trade, have resigned the splendour of opulence, and quitted the delights of neighbourhood, to disperse themselves over the country, where they would till the ground, and

fish in the rivers, and range the mountains, AND BE FREE.

These surely are brave words. If the mere sound of freedom can operate thus powerfully, let no man hereafter doubt the story of the Pied Piper. *The removal of the people of Boston into the country,* seems even to the Congress not only *difficult in its execution,* but *important in its consequences.* The difficulty of execution is best known to the *Bostonians* themselves; the consequence, alas! will only be, that they will leave good houses to wiser men.

Yet before they quit the comforts of a warm home for the sounding something which they think better, he cannot be thought their enemy who advises them to consider well whether they shall find it. By turning fishermen or hunters, woodmen or shepherds, they may become wild, but it is not so easy to conceive them free; for who can be more a slave than he that is driven by force from the comforts of life, is compelled to leave his house to a casual comer, and whatever he does, or wherever he wanders, finds every moment some new testimony of his own subjection? If choice of evil be freedom, the felon in the gallies has his option of labour or of stripes. The *Bostonian* may quit his house to starve in the fields; his dog may refuse to set, and smart under the lash, and they may then congratulate each other upon the smiles of liberty, *profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight.*

To treat such designs as serious, would be to think too contemptuously of *Bostonian* understandings. The artifice indeed is not new: the

blusterer who threatened in vain to destroy his opponent, has sometimes obtained his end, by making it believed that he would hang himself.

But terrors and pity are not the only means by which the taxation of the Americans is opposed. There are those who profess to use them only as auxiliaries to reason and justice, who tell us, that to tax the colonies is usurpation and oppression, an invasion of natural and legal rights, and a violation of those principles which support the constitution of English government.

This question is of great importance. That the Americans are able to bear taxation is indubitable; that their refusal may be over-ruled is highly probable; but power is no sufficient evidence of truth. Let us examine our own claim, and the objections of the recusants, with caution proportioned to the event of the decision, which must convict one part of robbery, or the other of rebellion.

A tax is a payment exacted by authority from part of the community for the benefit of the whole. From whom, and in what proportion such payment shall be required, and to what uses it shall be applied, those only are to judge to whom government is intrusted. In the British dominions taxes are apportioned, levied, and appropriated by the states assembled in parliament.

Of every empire all the subordinate communities are liable to taxation, because they all share the benefits of government, and therefore ought all to furnish their proportion of the expence.

This the Americans have never openly denied. That it is their duty to pay the costs of their own

safety they seem to admit; nor do they refuse their contribution to the exigencies, whatever they may be, of the British empire; but they make this participation of the publick burthen a duty of very uncertain extent, and imperfect obligation, a duty temporary, occasional, and elective, of which they reserve to themselves the right of settling the degree, the time, and the duration, of judging when it may be required, and when it has been performed.

They allow to the supreme power nothing more than the liberty of notifying to them its demands or its necessities. Of this notification they profess to think for themselves, how far it shall influence their counsels, and of the necessities alledged, how far they shall endeavour to relieve them. They assume the exclusive power of settling not only the mode, but the quantity of this payment. They are ready to co-operate with all the other dominions of the king; but they will co-operate by no means which they do not like, and at no greater charge than they are willing to bear.

This claim, wild as it may seem, this claim, which supposes dominion without authority, and subjects without subordination, has found among the libertines of policy many clamorous and hardy vindicators. The laws of nature, the rights of humanity, the faith of charters, the danger of liberty, the encroachments of usurpation, have been thundered in our ears, sometimes by interested faction, and sometimes by honest stupidity.

It is said by Fontenelle, that if twenty philosophers shall resolutely deny that the presence of the

sun makes the day, he will not despair but whole nations may adopt the opinion. So many political dogmatists have denied to the Mother-country the power of taxing the Colonies, and have enforced their denial with so much violence of outcry, that their sect is already very numerous, and the publick voice suspends its decision.

In moral and political questions the contest between interest and justice has been often tedious and often fierce, but perhaps it never happened before, that justice found much opposition with interest on her side.

For the satisfaction of this inquiry, it is necessary to consider how a colony is constituted, what are the terms of migration as dictated by nature, or settled by compact, and what social or political rights the man loses, or acquires, that leaves his country to establish himself in a distant plantation?

Of two modes of migration the history of mankind informs us, and so far as I can yet discover, of two only.

In countries where life was yet unadjusted, and policy unformed, it sometimes happened that by the dissensions of heads of families, by the ambition of daring adventurers, by some accidental pressure of distress, or by the mere discontent of idleness, one part of the community broke off from the rest, and numbers, greater or smaller, forsook their habitations, put themselves under the command of some favourite of fortune, and with or without the consent of their countrymen or governors, went out to see what better regions they

could occupy, and in what place, by conquest or by treaty, they could gain a habitation.

Sons of enterprise like these, who committed to their own swords their hopes and their lives, when they left their country, became another nation, with designs, and prospects, and interests, of their own. They looked back no more to their former home; they expected no help from those whom they had left behind; if they conquered, they conquered for themselves; if they were destroyed, they were not by any other power either lamented or revenged.

Of this kind seem to have been all the migrations of the early world, whether historical or fabulous, and of this kind were the eruptions of those nations which from the North invaded the Roman empire, and filled Europe with new sovereignties.

But when by the gradual admission of wiser laws and gentler manners, society became more compacted and better regulated, it was found that the power of every people consisted in union, produced by one common interest, and operating in joint efforts and consistent counsels.

From this time independence perceptibly wasted away. No part of the nation was permitted to act for itself. All now had the same enemies and the same friends; the government protected individuals, and individuals were required to refer their designs to the prosperity of the government.

By this principle it is, that states are formed and consolidated. Every man is taught to consider his own happiness as combined with the publick prosperity, and to think himself great and power-

ful, in proportion to the greatness and power of his governors.

Had the Western continent been discovered between the fourth and tenth century, when all the northern world was in motion; and had navigation been at that time sufficiently advanced to make so long a passage easily practicable, there is little reason for doubting but the intumescençe of nations would have found its vent, like all other expansive violence, where there was least resistance; and that Huns and Vandals, instead of fighting their way to the south of Europe, would have gone by thousands and by myriads under their several chiefs to take possession of regions smiling with pleasure and waving with fertility, from which the naked inhabitants were unable to repel them.

Every expedition would in those days of laxity have produced a distinct and independent state. The Scandinavian heroes might have divided the country among them, and have spread the feudal subdivision of regality from Hudson's Bay to the Pacifick Ocean.

But Columbus came five or six hundred years too late for the candidates of sovereignty. When he formed his project of discovery, the fluctuations of military turbulence had subsided, and Europe began to regain a settled form, by established government and regular subordination. No man could any longer erect himself into a chieftain, and lead out his fellow-subjects by his own authority to plunder or to war. He that committed any act of hostility by land or sea, without the commission of some acknowledged sovereign, was considered by all mankind as a robber or pirate, names

which were now of little credit, and of which therefore no man was ambitious.

Columbus in a remoter time would have found his way to some discontented Lord, or some younger brother of a petty sovereign, who would have taken fire at his proposal, and have quickly kindled with equal heat a troop of followers; they would have built ships, or have seized them, and have wandered with him at all adventures as far as they could keep hope in their company. But the age being now past of vagrant excursion and fortuitous hostility, he was under the necessity of travelling from court to court, scorned and repulsed as a wild projector, an idle promiser of kingdoms in the clouds: nor has any part of the world yet had reason to rejoice that he found at last reception and employment.

In the same year, in a year hitherto disastrous to mankind, by the Portuguese was discovered the passage of the Indies, and by the Spaniards the coast of America. The nations of Europe were fired with boundless expectations, and the discoverers pursuing their enterprise, made conquests in both hemispheres of wide extent. But the adventurers were contented with plunder; though they took gold and silver to themselves, they seized islands and kingdoms in the name of their sovereigns. When a new region was gained, a governor was appointed by that power which had given the commission to the conqueror; nor have I met with any European but Stukeley of London, that formed a design of exalting himself in the newly found countries to independent dominion.

To secure a conquest, it was always necessary to plant a colony, and territories thus occupied and

settled were rightly considered as mere extensions or processes of empire; as ramifications which, by the circulation of one publick interest, communicated with the original source of dominion, and which were kept flourishing and spreading by the radical vigour of the Mother-country.

The Colonies of England differ no otherwise from those of other nations, than as the English constitution differs from theirs. All government is ultimately and essentially absolute, but subordinate societies may have more immunities, or individuals greater liberty, as the operations of govenment are differently conducted. An Englishman in the common course of life and action feels no restraint. An English Colony has very liberal powers of regulating its own manners and adjusting its own affairs. But an English individual may by the supreme authority be deprived of liberty, and a Colony divested of its powers, for reasons of which that authority is the only judge.

In sovereignty there are no gradations. There may be limited royalty, there may be limited consulship; but there can be no limited government. There must in every society be some power or other from which there is no appeal, which admits no restrictions, which pervades the whole mass of the community, regulates and adjusts all subordination, enacts laws or repeals them, erects or annuls judicatures, extends or contracts privileges, exempt itself from question or controul, and bounded only by physical necessity.

By this power, wherever it subsists, all legislation and jurisdiction is animated and maintained. From this all legal rights are emanations, which,

whether equitably or not, may be legally recalled. It is not infallible, for it may do wrong; but it is irresistible, for it can be resisted only by rebellion, by an act which makes it questionable what shall be thenceforward the supreme power.

An English Colony is a number of persons, to whom the King grants a charter, permitting them to settle in some distant country, and enabling them to constitute a corporation, enjoying such powers as the charter grants, to be administered in such forms as the charter prescribes. As a corporation they make laws for themselves, but as a corporation subsisting by a grant from higher authority, to the controul of that authority they continue subject.

As men are placed at a greater distance from the supreme council of the kingdom, they must be intrusted with ampler liberty of regulating their conduct by their own wisdom. As they are more secluded from easy recourse to national judicature, they must be more extensively commissioned to pass judgment on each other.

For this reason our more important and opulent Colonies see the appearance and feel the effect of a regular legislature, which in some places has acted so long with unquestioned authority, that it has forgotten whence that authority was originally derived.

To their charters the Colonies owe, like other corporations, their political existence. The solemnities of legislation, the administration of justice, the security of property, are all bestowed upon them by the royal grant. Without their charter there would be no power among them, by

which any law could be made, or duties enjoined, any debt recovered, or criminal punished.

A charter is a grant of certain powers or privileges given to a part of the community for the advantage of the whole, and is therefore liable by its nature to change or to revocation. Every act of government aims at publick good. A charter which experience has shewn to be detrimental to the nation, is to be repealed; because general prosperity must always be preferred to particular interest. If a charter be used to evil purposes, it is forfeited, as the weapon is taken away which is injuriously employed.

The charter therefore by which provincial governments are constituted, may be always legally, and where it is either inconvenient in its nature, or misapplied in its use, may be equitably repealed; by such repeal the whole fabrick of subordination is immediately destroyed, and the consitution sunk at once into a chaos: the society is dissolved into a tumult of individuals, without authority to command, or obligation to obey; without any punishment of wrongs but by personal resentment, or any protection of right but by the hand of the possessor.

A Colony is to the Mother-country as a member to the body, deriving its action and its strength from the general principle of vitality; receiving from the body, and communicating to it, all the benefits and evils of health and disease; liable in dangerous maladies to sharp applications, of which the body however must partake the pain; and exposed, if incurably tainted, to amputation, by which the body likewise will be mutilated.

The Mother-country always considers the Colonies thus connected, as parts of itself; the prosperity or unhappiness of either is the prosperity or unhappiness of both; not perhaps of both in the same degree, for the body may subsist, though less commodiously, without a limb, but the limb must perish if it be parted from the body.

Our Colonies therefore, however distant, have been hitherto treated as constituent parts of the British empire. The inhabitants incorporated by English charters, are entitled to all the rights of Englishmen. They are governed by English laws, entitled to English dignities, regulated by English counsels, and protected by English arms; and it seems to follow, by consequence not easily avoided, that they are subject to English government, and chargeable by English taxation.

To him that considers the nature, the original, the progress, and the constitution of the Colonies, who remembers that the first discoverers had commissions from the crown, that the first settlers owe to a charter their civil forms and regular magistracy, and that all personal immunities and legal securities, by which the condition of the subject has been from time to time improved, have been extended to the Colonists, it will not be doubted but the parliament of England has a right to bind them by statutes, and *to bind them in all cases whatsoever*, and has therefore a natural and constitutional power of laying upon them any tax or impost, whether external or internal, upon the product of land, or the manufactures of industry, in the exigencies of war, or in the time of profound peace, for the defence

of *America, for the purpose of raising a revenue,* or for any other end beneficial to the empire.

There are some, and those not inconsiderable for number, nor contemptible for knowledge, who except the power of taxation from the general dominion of parliament, and hold, that whatever degrees of obedience may be exacted, or whatever authority may be exercised in other acts of government, there is still reverence to be paid to money, and that legislation passes its limits when it violates the purse.

Of this exception, which by a head not fully impregnated with politicks is not easily comprehended, it is alledged as an unanswerable reason, that the Colonies send no representatives to the House of Commons.

It is, say the American advocates, the natural distinction of a freeman, and the legal privilege of an Englishman, that he is able to call his possessions his own, that he can sit secure in the enjoyment of inheritance or acquisition, that his house is fortified by the law, and that nothing can be taken from him but by his own consent. This consent is given for every man by his representative in parliament. The Americans unrepresented cannot consent to English taxations, as a corporation, and they will not consent as individuals.

Of this argument, it has been observed by more than one, that its force extends equally to all other laws, for a freeman is not to be exposed to punishment, or be called to any onerous service but by his own consent. The Congress has extracted a position from the fanciful Montesquieu, that *in a free state every man being a free agent ought to be con-*

cerned in his own government. Whatever is true of taxation is true of every other law, that he who is bound by it without his consent, is not free, for he is not concerned in his own government.

He that denies the English parliament the right of taxation, denies it likewise the right of making any other laws, civil or criminal, yet this power over the Colonies was never yet disputed by themselves. They have always admitted statutes for the punishment of offences, and for the redress or prevention of inconveniencies, and the reception of any law draws after it, by a chain which cannot be broken, the unwelcome necessity of submitting to taxation.

That a free man is governed by himself, or by laws to which he has consented, is a position of mighty sound: but every man that utters it, with whatever confidence, and every man that hears it, with whatever acquiescence, if consent be supposed to imply the power of refusal, feels it to be false. We virtually and implicitly allow the institutions of any government of which we enjoy the benefit, and solicit the protection. In wide-extended dominions, though power has been diffused with the most even hand, yet a very small part of the people are either primarily or secondarily consulted in legislation. The business of the Publick must be done by delegation. The choice of delegates is made by a select number, and those who are not electors stand idle and helpless spectators of the commonweal, *wholly unconcerned in the government of themselves.*

Of electors the hap is but little better. They are often far from unanimity in their choice, and

where the numbers approach to equality, almost half must be governed not only without, but against their choice.

How any man can have consented to institutions established in distant ages, it will be difficult to explain. In the most favourite residence of liberty, the consent of individuals is merely passive, a tacit admission in every community of the terms which that community grants and requires. As all are born the subjects of some state or other, we may be said to have been all born consenting to some system of government. Other consent than this, the condition of civil life does not allow. It is the unmeaning clamour of the pedants of policy, the delirious dream of republican fanaticism.

But hear, ye sons and daughters of liberty, the sounds which the winds are wafting from the Western Continent. The Americans are telling one another, what, if we may judge from their noisy triumph, they have but lately discovered, and what yet is a very important truth: *That they are entitled to life, liberty, and property, and that they have never ceded to any sovereign power whatever a right to dispose of either without their consent.*

While this resolution stands alone, the Americans are free from singularity of opinion; their wit has not yet betrayed them to heresy. While they speak as the naked sons of nature, they claim but what is claimed by other men, and have withheld nothing but what all withhold. They are here upon firm ground, behind entrenchments which never can be forced.

Humanity is very uniform. The Americans have this resemblance to Europeans, that they do

not always know when they are well. They soon quit the fortress that could neither have been mined by sophistry, nor battered by declamation. Their next resolution declares, *that their ancestors, who first settled the colonies, were, at the time of their emigration from the Mother-country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities, of free and natural-born subjects within the realm of* England.

This likewise is true; but when this is granted, their boast of original rights is at an end; they are no longer in a state of nature. These lords of themselves, these kings of *me*, these demigods of independence, sink down to colonists, governed by a charter. If their ancestors were subjects, they acknowledged a sovereign: if they had a right to English privileges, they were accountable to English laws, and, what must grieve the lover of liberty to discover, had ceded to the king and parliament, whether the right or not, at least the power of disposing, *without their consent, of their lives, libertics, and properties.* It therefore is required of them to prove, that the parliament ever ceded to them a dispensation from that obedience, which they owe as natural-born subjects, or any degree of independence or immunity not enjoyed by other Englishmen.

They say, That by such emigration they by no means forfeited, surrendered, or lost, any of those rights, but that *they were, and their descendants now are, entitled to the exercise and enjoyment of all such of them as their local and other circumstances enable them to exercise and enjoy.*

That they who form a settlement by a lawful charter, having committed no crime, forfeit no

privileges, will be readily confessed: but what they do not forfeit by any judicial sentence, they may lose by natural effects. As man can be but in one place at once, he cannot have the advantages of multiplied residence. He that will enjoy the brightness of sunshine, must quit the coolness of the shade. He who goes voluntarily to America, cannot complain of losing what he leaves in Europe. He perhaps had a right to vote for a knight or burgess; by crossing the Atlantick he has not nullified his right; but he has made its exertion no longer possible*. By his own choice he has left a country where he had a vote and little property, for another where he has great property, but no vote. But as this preference was deliberate and unconstrained, he is still *concerned in the government of himself;* he has reduced himself from a voter to one of the innumerable multitude that have no vote. He has truly *ceded his right*, but he still is governed by his own consent; because he has consented to throw his atom of interest into the general mass of the community. Of the consequences of his own act he has no cause to complain; he has chosen, or intended to choose, the greater good; he is represented, as himself desired, in the general representation.

But the privileges of an American scorn the limits of place; they are part of himself, and cannot be lost by departure from his country; they float in the air, or glide under the ocean.

DORIS *amara suam non intermisceat undam.*

* Of this reasoning, I owe part to a conversation with Sir John Hawkins.

A planter, wherever he settles, is not only a freeman, but a legislator, *ubi imperator, ibi* Roma. *As the* English *colonists are not represented in the* British *parliament, they are entitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their several legislatures, in all cases of taxation and internal polity, subject only to the negative of the sovereign, in such manner as has been heretofore used and accustomed. We cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the* British *parliament as are* bona fide *restrained to the regulation of our external commerce—excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects of* America without their consent.

Their reason for this claim is, *That the foundation of* English *liberty and of all government, is a right in the people to participate in their legislative council.*

They inherit, they say, *from their ancestors, the right which their ancestors possessed, of enjoying all the privileges of* Englishmen. That they inherit the right of their ancestors is allowed; but they can inherit no more. Their ancestors left a country where the representatives of the people were elected by men particularly qualified, and where those who wanted qualifications, or who did not use them, were bound by the decisions of men, whom they had not deputed.

The Colonists are the descendents of men, who either had no vote in elections, or who voluntarily resigned them for something, in their opinion, of more estimation; they have, therefore, exactly what their ancestors left them, not a vote in making laws, or in constituting legislators, but the happiness of being protected by law, and the duty of obeying it.

What their ancestors did not carry with them, neither they nor their descendants have since acquired. They have not, by abandoning their part in one legislature, obtained the power of constituting another, exclusive and independent, any more than the multitudes, who are now debarred from voting, have a right to erect a separate parliament for themselves.

Men are wrong for want of sense, but they are wrong by halves for want of spirit. Since the Americans have discovered that they can make a parliament, whence comes it that they do not think themselves equally empowered to make a king? If they are subjects, whose government is constituted by a charter, they can form no body of independent legislature. If their rights are inherent and underived, they may by their own suffrages encircle with a diadem the brows of Mr *Cushing*.

It is farther declared by the Congress of *Philadelphia, That his Majesty's colonies are entitled to all the privileges and immunities granted and confirmed to them by royal charters, or secured to them by their several codes of provincial laws.*

The first clause of this resolution is easily understood, and will be readily admitted. To all the privileges which a charter can convey, they are by a royal charter evidently entitled. The second clause is of greater difficulty; for how can a provincial law secure privileges or immunities to a province? Provincial laws may grant to certain individuals of the province the enjoyment of gainful, or an immunity from onerous offices; they may operate upon the people to whom they relate; but no province can confer provincial privileges on it-

self. They may have a right to all which the king has given them; but it is a conceit of the other hemisphere, that men have a right to all which they have given to themselves.

A corporation is considered in law as an individual, and can no more extend its own immunities, than a man can by his own choice assume dignities or titles.

The legislature of a Colony, let not the comparison be too much disdained, is only the vestry of a larger parish, which may lay a cess on the inhabitants, and enforce the payment; but can extend no influence beyond its own district, must modify its particular regulations by the general law, and whatever may be its internal expences, is still liable to taxes laid by superior authority.

The charters given to different provinces are different, and no general right can be extracted from them. The charter of Pennsylvania, where this Congress of anarchy has been impudently held, contains a clause admitting in express terms taxation by the parliament. If in the other charters no such reserve is made, it must have been omitted as not necessary, because it is implied in the nature of subordinate government. They who are subject to laws, are liable to taxes. If any such immunity had been granted, it is still revocable by the legislature, and ought to be revoked, as contrary to the publick good, which is in every charter ultimately intended.

Suppose it true, that any such exemption is contained in the charter of Maryland, it can be pleaded only by the Marylanders. It is of no use for any other province; and with regard even to them, must have been considered as one of the grants in

which the king has been deceived, and annulled as mischievous to the publick, by sacrificing to one little settlement the general interest of the empire; as infringing the system of dominion, and violating the compact of government. But Dr Tucker has shewn, that even this charter promises no exemption from parliamentary taxes.

In the controversy agitated about the beginning of this century, whether the English laws could bind Ireland, Davenant, who defended against Molyneux the claims of England, considered it as necessary to prove nothing more, than that the present Irish must be deemed a colony.

The necessary connexion of representatives with taxes, seems to have sunk deep into many of those minds, that admit sounds without their meaning.

Our nation is represented in parliament by an assembly as numerous as can well consist with order and dispatch, chosen by persons so differently qualified in different places, that the mode of choice seems to be, for the most part, formed by chance, and settled by custom. Of individuals far the greater part have no vote, and of the voters few have any personal knowledge of him to whom they intrust their liberty and fortune.

Yet this representation has the whole effect expected or desired; that of spreading so wide the care of general interest, and the participation of publick counsels, that the advantage or corruption of particular men can seldom operate with much injury to the publick.

For this reason many populous and opulent towns neither enjoy nor desire particular representatives; they are included in the general scheme

of publick administration, and cannot suffer but with the rest of the empire.

It is urged that the Americans have not the same security, and that a British legislator may wanton with their property; yet if it be true, that their wealth is our wealth, and that their ruin will be our ruin, the Parliament has the same interest in attending to them, as to any other part of the nation. The reason why we place any confidence in our representatives is, that they must share in the good or evil which their counsels shall produce. Their share is indeed commonly consequential and remote; but it is not often possible that any immediate advantage can be extended to such numbers as may prevail against it. We are therefore as secure against intentional depravations of government as human wisdom can make us, and upon this security the Americans may venture to repose.

It is said by the *Old Member* who has written an *Appeal* against the tax, that *as the produce of* American *labour is spent in* British *manufactures, the balance of trade is greatly against them; whatever you take directly in taxes, is in effect taken from your own commerce. If the minister seizes the money with which the* American *should pay his debts and come to market, the merchant cannot expect him as a customer, nor can the debts already contracted be paid.—Suppose we obtain from* America *a million instead of one hundred thousand pounds, it would be supplying one personal exigence by the future ruin of our commerce.*

Part of this is true; but the *Old Member* seems not to perceive, that if his brethren of the legislature know this as well as himself, the Americans

are in no danger of oppression, since by men commonly provident they must be so taxed, as that we may not lose one way what we gain another.

The same *Old Member* has discovered that the judges formerly thought it illegal to tax Ireland, and declares that no cases can be more alike than those of Ireland and America: yet the judges whom he quotes have mentioned a difference. *Ireland*, they say, *hath a parliament of its own.* When any colony has an independent parliament acknowledged by the parliament of Britain, the cases will differ less. Yet by the 6 Geo. I. chap. 5. the acts of the British parliament bind Ireland.

It is urged, that when Wales, Durham, and Chester, were divested of their particular privileges, or ancient government, and reduced to the state of English counties, they had representatives assigned them.

To those from whom something had been taken, something in return might properly be given. To the Americans their charters are left as they were, nor have they lost any thing except that of which their sedition has deprived them. If they were to be represented in parliament, something would be granted, though nothing is withdrawn.

The inhabitants of Chester, Durham, and Wales, were invited to exchange their peculiar institutions for the power of voting, which they wanted before. The Americans have voluntarily resigned the power of voting, to live in distant and separate governments, and what they have voluntarily quitted, they have no right to claim.

It must always be remembered, that [illegible] are represented by the same virtual rep[illegible]

the greater part of Englishmen; and that if by change of place they have less share in the legislature than is proportionate to their opulence, they by their removal gained that opulence, and had originally and have now their choice of a vote at home, or riches at a distance.

We are told, what appears to the *Old Member* and to others a position that must drive us into inextricable absurdity, that we have either no right, or the sole right of taxing the colonies. The meaning is, that if we can tax them, they cannot tax themselves; and that if they can tax themselves, we cannot tax them. We answer with very little hesitation, that for the general use of the empire we have the sole right of taxing them. If they have contributed any thing in their own assemblies, what they contributed was not paid but given; it was not a tax or tribute, but a present. Yet they have the natural and legal power of levying money on themselves for provincial purposes, of providing for their own expence, at their own discretion. Let not this be thought new or strange; it is the state of every parish in the kingdom.

The friends of the Americans are of different opinions. Some think that, being unrepresented, they ought to tax themselves, and others that they ought to have representatives in the British parliament.

If they are to tax themselves, what power is to remain in the supreme legislature? That they must settle their own mode of levying their money is supposed. May the British parliament tell them how much they shall contribute? If the sum may be prescribed, they will return few

thanks for the power of raising it; if they are at liberty to grant or to deny, they are no longer subjects.

If they are to be represented, what number of these western orators are to be admitted? This I suppose the parliament must settle; yet if men have a natural and unalienable right to be represented, who shall determine the number of their delegates? Let us however suppose them to send twenty-three, half as many as the kingdom of Scotland, what will this representation avail them? To pay taxes will be still a grievance. The love of money will not be lessened, nor the power of getting it increased.

Whither will this necessity of representation drive us? Is every petty settlement to be out of the reach of government, till it has sent a senator to parliament; or may two of them, or a greater number, be forced to unite in a single deputation? What at last is the difference between him that is taxed by compulsion without representation, and him that is represented by compulsion in order to be taxed?

For many reigns the House of Commons was in a state of fluctuation: new burgesses were added from time to time, without any reason now to be discovered; but the number has been fixed for more than a century and a half, and the king's power of increasing it has been questioned. It will hardly be thought fit to new-model the constitution in favour of the planters, who, as they grow rich, may buy estates in England, and, without any innovation, effectually represent their native colonies.

The friends of the Americans indeed ask for them what they do not ask for themselves. This inestimable right of representation they have never solicited. They mean not to exchange solid money for such airy honour. They say, and say willingly, that they cannot conveniently be represented; because their inference is, that they cannot be taxed. They are too remote to share the general government, and therefore claim the privilege of governing themselves.

Of the principles contained in the resolutions of the Congress, however wild, indefinite, and obscure, such has been the influence upon American understanding, that from New England to South Carolina there is formed a general combination of all the provinces against their Mother-country. The madness of independence has spread from colony to colony, till order is lost and government despised, and all is filled with misrule, uproar, violence, and confusion. To be quiet is disaffection, to be loyal is treason.

The Congress of Philadelphia, an assembly convened by its own authority, has promulgated a declaration, in compliance with which the communication between Britain and the greatest part of North America is now suspended. They ceased to admit the importation of English goods in December 1774, and determine to permit the exportation of their own no longer than to November 1775.

This might seem enough, but they have done more. They have declared, that they shall treat all as enemies who do not concur with them in dis-

affection and perverseness, and that they will trade with none that shall trade with Britain

They threaten to stigmatize in their Gazette those who shall consume the products or merchandise of their Mother-country, and are now searching suspected houses for prohibited goods.

These hostile declarations they profess themselves ready to maintain by force. They have armed the militia of their provinces, and seized the publick stores of ammunition. They are therefore no longer subjects, since they refuse the laws of their sovereign, and in defence of that refusal are making open preparations for war.

Being now in their own opinion free states, they are not only raising armies, but forming alliances, not only hastening to rebel themselves, but seducing their neighbours to rebellion. They have published an address to the inhabitants of Quebec, in which discontent and resistance are openly incited, and with very respectful mention of the *sagacity of Frenchmen*, invite them to send deputies to the Congress of Philadelphia, to that seat of Virtue and Veracity, whence the people of England are told, that to establish popery, *a religion fraught with sanguinary and impious tenets*, even in Quebec, a country of which the inhabitants are papists, is so contrary to the constitution, that it cannot be lawfully done by the legislature itself; where it is made one of the articles of their association, to deprive the conquered French of their religious establishment; and whence the French of Quebec are, at the same time, flattered into sedition, by professions of expecting, "from the libe-"rality of sentiment distinguishing *their* nation,

" *that* difference of religion will not prejudice them " against a hearty amity, *because* the transcendent " nature of freedom elevates all who unite in the " cause, above such low-minded infirmities."

Quebec, however, is at a great distance. They have aimed a stroke from which they may hope for greater and more speedy mischief. They have tried to infect the people of England with the contagion of disloyalty. Their credit is happily not such as gives them influence proportionate to their malice. When they talk of their pretended immunities *guaranteed by the plighted faith of Government, and the most solemn compacts with English Sovereigns*, we think ourselves at liberty to inquire when the faith was plighted, and the compact made; and when we can only find that king James and king Charles the First promised the settlers in Massachusett's Bay, now famous by the appellation of *Bostonians*, exemption from taxes for seven years, we infer with Mr Mauduit, that by this *solemn compact*, they were, after expiration of the stipulated term, liable to taxation.

When they apply to our compassion, by telling us, that they are to be carried from their own country to be tried for certain offences, we are not so ready to pity them, as to advise them not to offend. While they are innocent they are safe.

When they tell of laws made expressly for their punishment, we answer, that tumults and sedition were always punishable, and that the new law prescribes only the mode of execution.

When it is said that the whole town of Boston is distressed for a misdemeanour of a few, we wonder at their shamefulness; for we know that the

town of Boston, and all the associated provinces, are now in rebellion to defend or justify the criminals.

If frauds in the imposts of Boston are tried by commission without a jury, they are tried here in the same mode; and why should the *Bostonians* expect from us more tenderness for them than for ourselves?

If they are condemned unheard, it is because there is no need of a trial. The crime is manifest and notorious. All trial is the investigation of something doubtful. An Italian philosopher observes, that no man desires to hear what he has already seen.

If their assemblies have been suddenly dissolved, what was the reason? Their deliberations were indecent, and their intentions seditious. The power of dissolution is granted and reserved for such times of turbulence. Their best friends have been lately soliciting the King to dissolve his parliament, to do what they so loudly complain of suffering.

That the same vengeance involves the innocent and guilty is an evil to be lamented, but human caution cannot prevent it, nor human power always redress it. To bring misery on those who have not deserved it, is part of the aggregated guilt of rebellion.

That governors have been sometimes given them only that a great man might get ease from importunity, and that they have had judges not always of the deepest learning or the purest integrity, we have no great reason to doubt, because such misfortunes happen to ourselves. Whoever is go-

verned, will sometimes be governed ill, even when he is most *concerned in his own government.*

That improper officers or magistrates are sent, is the crime or folly of those that sent them. When incapacity is discovered, it ought to be removed; if corruption is detected, it ought to be punished. No government could subsist for a day, if single errors could justify defection.

One of their complaints is not such as can claim much commiseration from the softest bosom. They tell us, that we have changed our conduct, and that a tax is now laid by Parliament on those who were never taxed by Parliament before. To this we think it may be easily answered, that the longer they have been spared, the better they can pay.

It is certainly not much their interest to represent innovation as criminal or invidious; for they have introduced into the history of mankind a new mode of disaffection, and have given, I believe, the first example of a proscription published by a Colony against the Mother-country.

To what is urged of new powers granted to the Courts of Admiralty, or the extension of authority conferred on the judges, it may be answered in a few words, that they have themselves made such regulations necessary; that they are established for the prevention of greater evils; at the same time it must be observed, that these powers have not been extended since the rebellion in America.

One mode of persuasion their ingenuity has suggested, which it may perhaps be less easy to resist. That we may not look with indifference on the American contest, or imagine that the struggle is

for a claim, which, however decided, is of small importance and remote consequence, the Philadelphian Congress has taken care to inform us, that they are resisting the demands of Parliament, as well for our sakes as their own.

Their keenness of perspicacity has enabled them to pursue consequences to a greater distance; to see through clouds impervious to the dimness of European sight; and to find, I know not how, that when they are taxed, we shall be enslaved.

That slavery is a miserable state we have been often told, and doubtless many a Briton will tremble to find it so near as in America; but how it will be brought hither, the Congress must inform us. The question might distress a common understanding; but the statesmen of the other hemisphere can easily resolve it. Our ministers, they say, are our enemies, and *if they should carry the point of taxation, may with the same army enslave us. It may be said we will not pay them; but remember,* say the western sages, *the taxes from America, and we may add the men, and particularly the Roman Catholicks of this vast continent, will then be in the power of your enemies. Nor have you any reason to expect, that after making slaves of us, many of us will refuse to assist in reducing you to the same abject state.*

These are dreadful menaces; but suspecting that they have not much the sound of probability, the Congress proceeds: *Do not treat this as chimerical. Know that in less than half a century the quit-rents reserved to the crown from the numberless grants of this vast continent, will pour large streams of wealth into the royal coffers. If to this be added the power of taxing* America *at pleasure, the crown will possess*

more treasure than may be necessary to purchase the remains *of liberty in your Island.*

All this is very dreadful; but amidst the terror that shakes my frame, I cannot forbear to wish that some sluice were opened for these streams of treasure. I should gladly see America return half of what England has expended in her defence; and of the stream that will *flow so largely in less than half a century*, I hope a small rill at least may be found to quench the thirst of the present generation, which seems to think itself in more danger of wanting money than of losing liberty.

It is difficult to judge with what intention such airy bursts of malevolence are vented; if such writers hope to deceive, let us rather repel them with scorn, than refute them by disputation.

In this last terrifick paragraph are two positions, that, if our fears do not overpower our reflection, may enable us to support life a little longer. We are told by these croakers of calamity, not only that our present ministers design to enslave us, but that the same malignity of purpose is to descend through all their successors, and that the wealth to be poured into England by the *Pactolus* of America will, whenever it comes, be employed to purchase *the remains of liberty.*

Of those who now conduct the national affairs, we may, without much arrogance, presume to know more than themselves, and of those who shall succeed them, whether minister or king, not to know less.

The other position is, that the *Crown*, if this laudable opposition should not be successful, *will have the power of taxing* America *at pleasure.*

Surely they think rather too meanly of our apprehensions, when they suppose us not to know what they well know themselves, that they are taxed, like all other British subjects, by Parliament; and that the Crown has not by the new imposts, whether right or wrong, obtained any additional power over their possessions.

It were a curious, but an idle speculation to inquire, what effect these dictators of sedition expect from the dispersion of their Letter among us. If they believe their own complaints of hardship, and really dread the danger which they describe, they will naturally hope to communicate the same perceptions to their fellow-subjects. But probably in America, as in other places, the chiefs are incendiaries, that hope to rob in the tumults of a conflagration, and toss brands among a rabble passively combustible. Those who wrote the Address, though they have shewn no great extent or profundity of mind, are yet probably wiser than to believe it: but they have been taught by some master of mischief, how to put in motion the engine of political electricity; to attract by the sounds of Liberty and Property, to repel by those of Popery and Slavery; and to give the great stroke by the name of *Boston*

When subordinate communities oppose the decrees of the general legislature with defiance thus audacious, and malignity thus acrimonious, nothing remains but to conquer or to yield; to allow their claim of independence, or to reduce them by force to submission and allegiance.

It might be hoped that no Englishman could be found, whom the menaces of our own Colonists,

just rescued from the French, would not move to indignation, like that of the Scythians, who, returning from war, found themselves excluded from their own houses by their slaves.

That corporations constituted by favour, and existing by sufferance, should dare to prohibit commerce with their native country, and threaten individuals by infamy, and societies with at least suspension of anity, for daring to be more obedient to government than themselves, is a degree of insolence, which not only deserves to be punished, but of which the punishment is loudly demanded by the order of life, and the peace of nations.

Yet there have risen up, in the face of the publick, men who, by whatever corruptions or whatever infatuation, have undertaken to defend the Americans, endeavour to shelter them from resentment, and propose reconciliation without submission.

As political diseases are naturally contagious, let it be supposed for a moment that Cornwall, seized with the Philadelphian frenzy, may resolve to separate itself from the general system of the English constitution, and judge of its own rights in its own parliament. A Congress might then meet at Truro, and address the other counties in a style not unlike the language of the American patriots:

"*Friends and Fellow-subjects,*

"We the delegates of the several towns and parishes of Cornwall, assembled to deliberate upon our own state and that of our constituents, having,

after serious debate and calm consideration, settled the scheme of our future conduct, hold it necessary to declare the resolutions which we think ourselves entitled to form by the unalienable rights of reasonable Beings, and into which we have been compelled by grievances and oppressions, long endured by us in patient silence, not because we did not feel, or could not remove them, but because we were unwilling to give disturbance to a settled government, and hoped that others would in time find, like ourselves, their true interest and their original powers, and all co-operate to universal happiness.

"But since having long indulged the pleasing expectation, we find general discontent not likely to increase, or not likely to end in general defection, we resolve to erect alone the standard of liberty.

"*Know then*, that you are no longer to consider Cornwall as an English county, visited by English judges, receiving law from an English parliament, or included in any general taxation of the kingdom; but as a state distinct and independent, governed by its own institutions, administered by its own magistrates, and exempt from any tax or tribute but such as we shall impose upon ourselves.

"We are the acknowledged descendents of the earliest inhabitants of Britain, of men, who before the time of history, took possession of the island desolate and waste, and therefore open to the first occupants. Of this descent, our language is a sufficient proof, which, not quite a century ago, was different from yours.

"Such are the Cornishmen; but who are you? who, but the unauthorised and lawless children of intruders, invaders, and oppressors? who, but the transmitters of wrong, the inheritors of robbery? In claiming independence we claim but little. We might require you to depart from a land which you possess by usurpation, and to restore all that you have taken from us.

"Independence is the gift of Nature. No man is born the master of another. Every Cornishman is a freeman, for we have never resigned the rights of humanity; and he only can be thought free, who is not governed but by his own consent.

"You may urge that the present system of government has descended through many ages, and that we have a larger part in the representation of the kingdom, than any other county.

"All this is true, but it is neither cogent nor persuasive. We look to the original of things. Our union with the English counties was either compelled by force, or settled by compact.

"That which was made by violence, may by violence be broken. If we were treated as a conquered people, our rights might be obscured, but could never be extinguished. The sword can give nothing but power, which a sharper sword can take away.

"If our union was by compact, whom could the compact bind but those that concurred in the stipulations? We gave our ancestors no commission to settle the terms of future existence. They might be cowards that were frighted, or blockheads that were heated; but whatever they were,

they could contract only for themselves. What they could establish, we can annul.

" Against our present form of government it shall stand in the place of all argument, that we do not like it. While we are governed as we do not like, where is our liberty? We do not like taxes, we will therefore not be taxed; we do not like your laws, and will not obey them.

" The taxes laid by our representatives, are laid, you tell us, by our own consent; but we will no longer consent to be represented. Our number of legislators was originally a burden, and ought to have been refused: it is now considered as a disproportionate advantage; who then will complain if we we resign it?

" We shall form a Senate of our own, under a President whom the King shall nominate, but whose authority we will limit, by adjusting his salary to his merit. We will not withhold a proper share of contribution to the necessary expence of lawful government, but we will decide for ourselves what share is proper, what expence is necessary, and what government is lawful.

" Till our council is proclaimed independent and unaccountable, we will, after the tenth day of September, keep our Tin in our own hands: you can be supplied from no other place, and must therefore comply, or be poisoned with the copper of your own kitchens.

" If any *Cornishman* shall refuse his name to this just and laudable association, he shall be tumbled from St Michael's Mount, or buried alive in a tin-mine; and if any emissary shall be found seducing *Cornishmen* to their former state, he shall be smear-

ed with tar, and rolled in feathers, and chased with dogs out of our dominions.

"From the *Cornish* Congress at *Truro*."

Of this memorial what could be said but that it was written in jest, or written by a madman? Yet I know not whether the warmest admirers of Pennsylvanian eloquence can find any argument in the Addresses of the Congress, that is not with greater strength urged by the *Cornishman*.

The argument of the irregular troops of controversy, stripped of its colours, and turned out naked to the view, is no more than this. Liberty is the birthright of man, and where obedience is compelled, there is no liberty. The answer is equally simple. Government is necessary to man, and where obedience is not compelled, there is no government.

If the subject refuses to obey, it is the duty of authority to use compulsion. Society cannot subsist but by the power, first of making laws, and then of enforcing them.

To one of the threats hissed out by the Congress, I have put nothing similar into the *Cornish* proclamation; because it is too wild for folly and too foolish for madness. If we do not withhold our King and his Parliament from taxing them, they will cross the Atlantick and enslave us.

How they will come they have not told us; perhaps they will take wing, and light upon our coasts. When the cranes thus begin to flutter, it is time for pygmies to keep their eyes about them. The Great Orator observes, that they will be very fit, after they have been taxed, to impose chains upon us. If they are so fit as their friend describes

them, and so willing as they describe themselves, let us increase our army, and double our militia.

It has been of late a very general practice to talk of slavery among those who are setting at defiance every power that keeps the world in order. If the learned Author of the *Reflections on Learning* has rightly observed, that no man ever could give law to language, it will be vain to prohibit the use of the word *slavery:* but I could wish it more discreetly uttered; it is driven at one time too hard into our ears by the loud hurricane of *Pennsylvanian* eloquence, and at another glides too cold into our hearts by the soft conveyance of a female patriot bewailing the miseries of her *friends and fellow-citizens.*

Such has been the progress of sedition, that those who a few years ago disputed only our right of laying taxes, now question the validity of every act of legislation. They consider themselves as emancipated from obedience, and as being no longer the subjects of the British Crown. They leave us no choice but of yielding or conquering, of resigning our dominion, or maintaining it by force.

From force many endeavours have been used either to dissuade, or to deter us. Sometimes the merit of the Americans is exalted, and sometimes their sufferings are aggravated. We are told of their contributions to the last war, a war incited by their outcries, and continued for their protection, a war by which none but themselves were gainers. All that they can boast is, that they did something for themselves, and did not wholly stand inactive while the sons of Britain were fighting in their cause.

If we cannot admire, we are called to pity them; to pity those that shew no regard to their Mother-country; have obeyed no law which they could violate; have imparted no good which they could withhold; have entered into associations of fraud to rob their creditors; and into combinations to distress all who depended on their commerce. We are reproached with the cruelty of shutting one port, where every port is shut against us. We are censured as tyrannical for hindering those from fishing, who have condemned our merchants to bankruptcy, and our manufacturers to hunger.

Others persuade us to give them more liberty, to take off restraints, and relax authority; and tell us what happy consequences will arise from forbearance: how their affections will be conciliated, and into what diffusions of beneficence their gratitude will luxuriate. They will love their friends. They will reverence their protectors. They will throw themselves into our arms, and lay their property at our feet. They will buy from no other what we can sell them; they will sell to no other what we wish to buy.

That any obligations should overpower their attention to profit, we have known them long enough not to expect. It is not to be expected from a more liberal people. With what kindness they repay benefits, they are now shewing us, who, as soon as we have delivered them from France, are defying and proscribing us.

But if we will permit them to tax themselves, they will give us more than we require. If we proclaim them independent, they will during plea-

sure, pay us a subsidy. The contest is not now for money, but for power. The question is not how much we shall collect, but by what authority the collection shall be made.

Those who find that the Americans cannot be shewn in any form that may raise love or pity, dress them in habiliments of terror, and try to make us think them formidable. The *Bostonians* can call into the field ninety thousand men. While we conquer all before us, new enemies will rise up behind, and our work will be always to begin. If we take possession of the towns, the Colonists will retire into the inland regions, and the gain of victory will be only empty houses, and a wide extent of waste and desolation. If we subdue them for the present, they will universally revolt in the next war, and resign us without pity to subjection and destruction.

To all this it may be answered, that between losing America and resigning it, there is no great difference; that it is not very reasonable to jump into the sea, because the ship is leaky. All those evils may befal us, but we need not hasten them.

The Dean of Gloucester has proposed, and seems to propose it seriously, that we should at once release our claims, declare them masters of themselves, and whistle them down the wind. His opinion is, that our gain from them will be the same, and our expence less. What they can have most cheaply from Britain, they will still buy; what they can sell to us at the highest price, they will still sell.

It is, however, a little hard, that having so lately fought and conquered for their safety, we should

govern them no longer. By letting them loose before the war, how many millions might have been saved. One wild proposal is best answered by another. Let us restore to the French what we have taken from them. We shall see our Colonists at our feet, when they have an enemy so near them. Let us give the Indians arms, and teach them discipline, and encourage them now and then to plunder a Plantation. Security and leisure are the parents of sedition.

While these different opinions are agitated, it seems to be determined by the Legislature, that force shall be tried. Men of the pen have seldom any great skill in conquering kingdoms, but they have strong inclination to give advice. I cannot forbear to wish, that this commotion may end without bloodshed, and that the rebels may be subdued by terror rather than by violence; and therefore recommend such a force as may take away, not only the power, but the hope of resistance, and by conquering without a battle, save many from the sword.

If their obstinacy continues without actual hostilities, it may perhaps be molified by turning out the soldiers to free quarters, forbidding any personal cruelty or hurt. It has been proposed, that the slaves should be set free, an act which surely the lovers of liberty cannot but commend. If they are furnished with fire-arms for defence, and utensils for husbandry, and settled in some simple form of government within the country, they may be more grateful and honest than their masters.

Far be it from any Englishman to thirst for the blood of his fellow-subjects. Those who most

deserve our resentment are unhappily at less distance. The Americans, when the Stamp Act was first proposed, undoubtedly disliked it, as every nation dislikes an impost; but they had no thought of resisting it, till they were encouraged and incited by European intelligence from men whom they thought their friends, but who were friends only to themselves.

On the original contrivers of mischief let an insulted nation pour out its vengeance. With whatever design they have inflamed this pernicious contest, they are themselves equally detestable. If they wish success to the Colonies, they are traitors to this country; if they wish their defeat, they are traitors at once to America and England. To them and them only must be imputed the interruption of commerce, and the miseries of war, the sorrow of those that shall be ruined, and the blood of those that shall fall.

Since the Americans have made it necessary to subdue them, may they be subdued with the least injury possible to their persons and their possessions! When they are reduced to obedience, may that obedience be secured by stricter laws and stronger obligations!

Nothing can be more noxious to society, than that erroneous clemency, which when a rebellion is suppressed, exacts no forfeiture and establishes no securities, but leaves the rebels in their former state. Who would not try the experiment which promises advantage without expense, if they once obtain a victory, their wishes are accomplished; if they are defeated, they are [illegible] perhaps less than their conquerors;

they play the game, the chance is always in their favour. In the mean time, they are growing rich by victualling the troops that we have sent against them, and perhaps gain more by the residence of the army than they lose by the obstruction of their port.

Their charters being now, I suppose, legally forfeited, may be modelled as shall appear most commodious to the Mother-country. Thus the privileges, which are found by experience liable to misuse, will be taken away, and those who now bellow as patriots, bluster as soldiers, and domineer as legislators, will sink into sober merchants and silent planters, peaceably diligent, and securely rich.

But there is one writer, and perhaps many who do not write, to whom the contraction of these pernicious privileges appears very dangerous, and who startle at the thoughts of *England free and America in chains*. Children fly from their own shadow, and rhetoricians are frighted by their own voices. *Chains* is undoubtedly a dreadful word; but perhaps the masters of civil wisdom may discover some gradations between chains and anarchy. Chains need not be put upon those who will be restrained without them. This contest may end in the softer phrase of English Superiority and American Obedience.

We are told, that the subjection of Americans may tend to the diminution of our own liberties: an event, which none but very perspicacious politicians are able to foresee. If slavery be thus fatally contagious, how is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?

But let us interrupt a while this dream of conquest, settlement, and supremacy. Let us remember that being to contend, according to one orator, with three millions of Whigs, and according to another, with ninety thousand patriots of Massachuset's Bay, we may possibly be checked in our career of reduction. We may be reduced to peace upon equal terms, or driven from the western continent, and forbidden to violate a second time the happy borders of the land of liberty. The time is now perhaps at hand, which Sir Thomas Browne predicted between jest and earnest,

> When America should no more send out her treasure,
> But spend it at home in American pleasure.

If we are allowed upon our defeat to stipulate conditions, I hope the treaty of Boston will permit us to import into the confederated Cantons such products as they do not raise, and such manufactures as they do not make, and cannot buy cheaper from other nations, paying like others the appointed customs; that if an English ship salutes a fort with four guns, it shall be answered at least with two; and that if an Englishman be inclined to hold a plantation, he shall only take an oath of allegiance to the reigning powers, and be suffered, while he lives inoffensively, to retain his own opinion of English rights, unmolested in his conscience by an oath of abjuration.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Booksellers having determined to publish a Body of English Poetry, I was persuaded to promise them a Preface to the works of each Author; an undertaking, as it was then presented to my mind, not very extensive or difficult.

My purpose was only to have allotted to every Poet an Advertisement, like those which we find in the French Miscellanies, containing a few dates and a general character; but I have been led beyond my intention, I hope, by the honest desire of giving useful pleasure.

In this minute kind of History, the succession of facts is not easily discovered; and I am not without some suspicion that some of Dryden's works are placed in wrong years. I have followed Langbaine, as the best authority, for his plays: and if I shall hereafter obtain a more correct chronology, will publish it; but I do not yet know that my account is erroneous.

Dryden's Remarks on Rymer have been somewhere printed before. The former edition I have not seen. This was transcribed for the press from his own manuscript.

As this undertaking was occasional and unforeseen, I must be supposed to have ca[illegible]

with less provision of materials than might have been accumulated by longer premeditation. Of the later writers at least I might, by attention and inquiry, have gleaned many particulars, which would have diversified and enlivened my Biography. These omissions, which it is now useless to lament, have been often supplied by the kindness of Mr STEEVENS and other friends; and great assistance has been given me by Mr SPENCE's Collections, of which I consider the communication as a favour worthy of publick acknowledgement.

LIVES

OF THE

ENGLISH POETS.

COWLEY.

THE Life of Cowley, notwithstanding the penury of English biography, has been written by Dr Sprat, an author whose pregnancy of imagination and elegance of language have deservedly set him high in the ranks of literature; but his zeal of friendship, or ambition of eloquence, has produced a funeral oration rather than a history: he has given the character, not the life, of Cowley; for he writes with so little detail, that scarcely any thing is distinctly known, but all is shewn, confused and enlarged, through the mist of panegyrick.

ABRAHAM COWLEY was born in the year one thousand six hundred and eighteen. His father was a grocer, whose condition Dr Sprat conceals under the genaral appellation of a citizen,

and, what would probably not have been less carefully suppressed, the omission of his name in the register of St Dunstan's parish gives reason to suspect that his father was a sectary. Whoever he was, he died before the birth of his son, and consequently left him to the care of his mother; whom Wood represents as struggling earnestly to procure him a literary education, and who, as she lived to the age of eighty, had her solicitude rewarded by seeing her son eminent, and, I hope, by seeing him fortunate, and partaking his prosperity. We know at least, from Sprat's account, that he always acknowledged her care, and justly paid the dues of filial gratitude.

In the window of his mother's apartment lay Spencer's Fairy Queen; in which he very early took delight to read, till, by feeling the charms of verse, he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such are the accidents which, sometimes remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that particular designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called Genius. The true Genius is a mind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particular direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great Painter of the present age, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's treatise.

By his mother's solicitation he was admitted into Westminster school, where he was soon distinguished. "He was wont," says Sprat, "to re-"late that he had this defect in his memory at that "time, that his teachers never could bring it to "retain the ordinary rules of grammar."

This is an instance of the natural desire of man to propagate a wonder. It is surely very difficult to tell any thing as it was heard, when Sprat could not refrain from amplifying a commodious incident, though the book to which he prefixed his narrative contained its confutation. A memory admitting some things, and rejecting others, an intellectual digestion that concocted the pulp of learning, but refused the husks, had the appearance of an instinctive elegance, of a particular provision made by Nature for literary politeness. But in the author's own honest relation, the marvel vanishes: he was, he says, such "an enemy "to all constraint, that his master never could pre-"vail on him to learn the rules without book." He does not tell that he could not learn the rules, but that, being able to perform his exercises without them, and being an "enemy to constraint," he spared himself the labour.

Among the English poets, Cowley, Milton, and Pope, might be said "to lisp in numbers;" and have given such early proofs, not only of powers of language, but of comprehension of things, as to more tardy minds seem scarcely credible. But of the learned puerilities of Cowley there is no doubt, since a volume of his poems was not only written but printed in his thirteenth year; containing, with other poetical compositions, "The "tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," written when he was ten years old; and "Con-"stantia and Philetus," written two years after.

While he was yet at school he produced a comedy called "Love's Riddle," though it was not published till he had been some time at Cam-

bridge. This comedy is of the pastoral kind, which requires no acquaintance with the living world, and therefore the time at which it was composed adds little to the wonders of Cowley's minority.

In 1636, he was removed to Cambridge, where he continued his studies with great intenseness: for he is said to have written, while he was yet a young student, the greater part of his "Davideis;" a work of which the materials could not have been collected without the study of many years, but by a mind of the greatest vigour and activity.

Two years after his settlement at Cambridge he published "Love's Riddle," with a poetical dedication to Sir Kenelm Digby; of whose acquaintance all his contemporaries seem to have been ambitious; and "Naufragium Joculare," a comedy written in Latin, but without due attention to the ancient models; for it is not loose verse, but mere prose. It was printed, with a dedication in verse, to Dr Comber, master of the college; but, having neither the facility of a popular nor the accuracy of a learned work, it seems to be now universally neglected.

At the beginning of the civil war, as the Prince passed through Cambridge in his way to York, he was entertained with a representation of the "Guardian," a comedy, which Cowley says was neither written nor acted, but rough-drawn by him, and repeated by the scholars. That this comedy was printed during his absence from his country, he appears to have considered as injurious to his reputation; though, during the sup-

pression of the theatres, it was sometimes privately acted with sufficient approbation.

In 1643, being now master of arts, he was, by the prevalence of the parliament, ejected from Cambridge, and sheltered himself at St John's College in Oxford; where, as is said by Wood, he published a satire, called "The Puritan and Papist," which was only inserted in the last collection of his works; and so distinguished himself by the warmth of his loyalty and the elegance of his conversation, that he gained the kindness and confidence of those who attended the King, and amongst others of Lord Falkland, whose notice cast a lustre on all to whom it was extended.

About the time when Oxford was surrendered to the parliament, he followed the Queen to Paris, where he became secretary to the Lord Jermyn, afterwards Earl of St Alban's, and was employed in such correspondence as the royal cause required, and particularly in cyphering and decyphering the letters that passed between the King and Queen; an employment of the highest confidence and honour. So wide was his province of intelligence, that, for several years, it filled all his days and two or three nights in the week.

In the year 1647, his "Mistress" was published; for he imagined, as he declared in his preface to a subsequent edition, that "poets are "scarcely thought freemen of their company with-"out paying some duties, or obliging themselves "to be true to Love."

This obligation to amorous ditties owes, I believe, its original to the fame of Petrarch, who, in an age rude and uncultivated, by his [illegible] ho-

mage to his Laura, refined the manners of the lettered world, and filled Europe with love and poetry. But the basis of all excellence is truth: he that professes love ought to feel its power. Petrarch was a real lover, and Laura doubtless deserved his tenderness. Of Cowley, we are told by Barnes *, who had means enough of information, that, whatever he may talk of his own inflammability, and the variety of characters by which his heart was divided, he in reality was in love but once, and then never had the resolution to tell his passion

This consideration cannot but abate, in some measure, the reader's esteem for the work and the author. To love excellence, is natural; it is natural likewise for the lover to solicit reciprocal regard by an elaborate display of his own qualifications. The desire of pleasing has in different men produced actions of heroism, and effusions of wit; but it seems as reasonable to appear the champion as the poet of an "airy nothing," and to quarrel as to write for what Cowley might have learned from his master Pindar to call the "dream of a shadow."

It is surely not difficult, in the solitude of a college, or in the bustle of the world, to find useful studies and serious employment. No man needs to be so burthened with life as to squander it in voluntary dreams of fictitious occurrences. The man that sits down to suppose himself charged with treason or peculation, and heats his mind to an elaborate purgation of his character from crimes

* Barnesii Anacreontem.

which he was never within the possibility of committing, differs only by the unfrequency of his folly from him who praises beauty which he never saw; complains of jealousy which he never felt; supposes himself sometimes invited and sometimes forsaken; fatigues his fancy, and ransacks his memory, for images which may exhibit the gaiety of hope, or the gloominess of despair; and dresses his imaginary Chloris or Phyllis sometimes in flowers fading as her beauty, and sometimes in gems lasting as her virtues.

At Paris, as secretary to lord Jermyn, he was engaged in transacting things of real importance with real men and real women, and at that time did not much employ his thoughts upon phantoms of gallantry. Some of his letters to Mr Bennet, afterwards Earl of Arlington, from April to December, in 1650, are preserved in "Miscellanea Aulica," a collection of papers published by Brown. These letters, being written like those of other men whose minds are more on things than words, contribute no otherwise to his reputation than as they shew him to have been above the affectation of unseasonable elegance, and to have known that the business of a statesman can be little forwarded by flowers of rhetorick.

One passage, however, seems not unworthy of some notice. Speaking of the Scotch treaty then in agitation:

"The Scotch treaty," says he, "is the only "thing now in which we are vitally concerned: I "am one of the last hopers, and yet cannot now "abstain from believing that an agreement will be "made; all people upon the place incline to that

" of union. The Scotch will moderate something " of the rigour of their demands; the mutual ne- " cessity of an accord is visible, the King is per- " suaded of it. And to tell you the truth (which " I take to be an argument above all the rest), " Virgil has told the same thing to that purpose."

This expression, from a secretary of the present time, would be considered as merely ludicrous, or at most as an ostentatious display of scholarship; but the manners of that time were so tinged with superstition, that I cannot but suspect Cowley of having consulted on this great occasion the Virgilian lots, and to have given some credit to the answer of his oracle.

Some years afterwards, " business," says Sprat, " passed of course into other hands;" and Cowley, being no longer useful at Paris, was in 1656 sent back into England, that, " under pretence of " privacy and retirement, he might take occasion " of giving notice of the posture of things in this " nation."

Soon after his return to London, he was seized by some messengers of the usurping powers, who were sent out in quest of another man; and being examined, was put into confinement, from which he was not dismissed without the security of a thousand pounds given by Dr Scarborough.

This year he published his poems, with a preface, in which he seems to have inserted something, suppressed in subsequent editions, which was interpreted to denote some relaxation of his loyalty. In this preface he declares, that " his desire had " been for some days past, and did still very vehe- " mently continue, to retire himself to some of

" the American plantations, and to forsake this " world for ever."

From the obloquy which the appearance of submission to the usurpers brought upon him, his biographer has been very diligent to clear him, and indeed it does not seem to have lessened his reputation. His wish for retirement we can easily believe to be undissembled; a man harrassed in one kingdom, and persecuted in another, who, after a course of business that employed all his days and half his nights in cyphering and decyphering, comes to his own country and steps into a prison, will be willing enough to retire to some place of quiet and of safety. Yet let neither our reverence for a genius, nor our pity for a sufferer, dispose us to forget that, if his activity was virtue, his retreat was cowardice.

He then took upon himself the character of physician, still, according to Sprat, with intention " to dissemble the main design of his coming " over;" and, as Mr Wood relates, " complying " with the men then in power (which was much " taken notice of by the royal party), he obtain- " ed an order to be created Doctor of Physick, " which being done to his mind (whereby he " gained the ill-will of some of his friends), he " went into France again, having made a copy of " verses on Oliver's death."

This is no favourable representation, yet even in this not much wrong can be discovered. How far he complied with the men in power, is to be enquired before he can be blamed. It is not said that he told them any secrets, or assisted them by intelligence or any other act. If he only

to be quiet, that they in whose hands he was might free him from confinement, he did what no law of society prohibits.

The man whose miscarriage in a just cause has put him in the power of his enemy may, without any violation of his integrity, regain his liberty, or preserve his life, by a promise of neutrality: for, the stipulation gives the enemy nothing which he had not before; the neutrality of a captive may be always secured by his imprisonment or death. He that is at the disposal of another may not promise to aid him in any injurious act, because no power can compel active obedience. He may engage to do nothing, but not to do ill.

There is reason to think that Cowley promised little. It does not appear that his compliance gained him confidence enough to be trusted without security, for the bond of his bail was never cancelled; nor that it made him think himself secure, for at that dissolution of government, which followed the death of Oliver, he returned into France, where he resumed his former station, and staid till the Restoration.

"He continued," says his biographer, "under "these bonds till the general deliverance;" it is therefore to be supposed, that he did not go to France, and act again for the King, without the consent of his bondsman; that he did not shew his loyalty at the hazard of his friend, but by his friend's permission.

Of the verses on Oliver's death, in which Wood's narrative seems to imply something encomiastick, there has been no appearance. There is a discourse concerning his government, indeed,

with verses intermixed, but such as certainly gained its author no friends among the abettors of usurpation.

A doctor of physick, however, he was made, at Oxford, in December 1657; and in the commencement of the Royal Society, of which an account has been given by Dr Birch, he appears busy among the experimental philosophers with the title of Dr Cowley.

There is no reason for supposing that he ever attempted practice: but his preparatory studies have contributed something to the honour of his country. Considering botany as necessary to a physician, he retired into Kent to gather plants; and as the predominance of a favourite study affects all subordinate operations of the intellect, botany in the mind of Cowley turned into poetry. He composed in Latin several books on Plants, of which the first and second display the qualities of Herbs, in elegiac verse; the third and fourth, the beauties of Flowers, in various measures; and in the fifth and sixth, the uses of Trees, in heroick numbers.

At the same time were produced, from the same university, the two great poets, Cowley and Milton, of dissimilar genius, of opposite principles; but concurring in the cultivation of Latin poetry, in which the English, till their works and May's poem appeared, seemed unable to contest the palm with any other of the lettered nations.

If the Latin performances of Cowley and Milton be compared (for May I hold to be superior to both), the advantage seems to lie on the side of Cowley. Milton is generally co[illegible]

press the thoughts of the ancients in their language; Cowley, without much loss of purity or elegance, accommodates the diction of Rome to his own conceptions.

At the Restoration, after all the diligence of his long service, and with consciousness not only of the merit of fidelity, but of the dignity of great abilities, he naturally expected ample preferments; and, that he might not be forgotten by his own fault, wrote a Song of Triumph. But this was a time of such general hope, that great numbers were inevitably disappointed; and Cowley found his reward very tediously delayed. He had been promised, by both Charles the First and Second, the Mastership of the Savoy; "but he lost it," says Wood, "by certain persons, enemies to the Muses."

The neglect of the Court was not his only mortification: having, by such alteration as he thought proper, fitted his old comedy of "The Guardian," for the stage, he produced it under the title of "The Cutter of Coleman-street." It was treated on the stage with great severity, and was afterwards censured as a satire on the King's party.

Mr Dryden, who went with Mr Sprat to the first exhibition, related to Mr Dennis, "that, "when they told Cowley how little favour had "been shewn him, he received the news of his "ill success, not with so much firmness as might "have been expected from so great a man."

What firmness they expected, or what weakness Cowley discovered, cannot be known. He that misses his end will never be as much pleased as he-

that attains it, even when he can impute no part of his failure to himself; and, when the end is to please the multitude, no man, perhaps, has a right, in things admitting of gradation and comparison, to throw the whole blame upon his judges, and totally to exclude diffidence and shame by a haughty consciousness of his own excellence.

For the rejection of this play it is difficult now to find the reason: it certainly has, in a very great degree, the power of fixing attention and exciting merriment. From the charge of disaffection he exculpates himself in his preface, by observing how unlikely it is, that, having followed the royal family through all their distresses, "he should chuse "the time of their restoration to begin a quarrel "with them." It appears, however, from the *Theatrical Register* of Downes, the prompter, to have been popularly considered as a satire on the royalists.

That he might shorten this tedious suspense, he published his pretensions and his discontent, in an ode called "The Complaint;" in which he styles himself the *melancholy* Cowley. This met with the usual fortune of complaints, and seems to have excited more contempt than pity.

These unlucky incidents are brought, maliciously enough, together in some stanzas, written about that time, on the choice of a laureat; a mode of satire, by which, since it was first introduced by Suckling, perhaps every generation of poets has been teazed.

Savoy-missing Cowley came into the court,
Making apologies for his bad play;
Every one gave him so good a report,
That Apollo gave heed to all he could say:
Nor would he have had, 'tis thought, a rebuke,
Unless he had done some notable folly:
Writ verses unjustly in praise of Sam Tuke,
Or printed his pitiful Melancholy.

His vehement desire of retirement now came again upon him. "Not finding," says the morose Wood, "that preferment conferred upon him which "he expected, while others for their money car- "ried away most places, he retired discontented "into Surrey."

"He was now," says the courtly Sprat, "weary "of the vexations and formalities of an active con- "dition. He had been perplexed with a long "compliance to foreign manners. He was satiated "with the arts of a court; which sort of life, though "his virtue made it innocent to him, yet nothing "could make it quiet. Those were the reasons "that made him to follow the violent inclination "of his own mind, which, in the greatest throng "of his former business, had still called upon him, "and represented to him the true delights of soli- "tary studies, of temperate pleasures, and a mo- "derate revenue, below the malice and flatteries of "fortune."

So differently are things seen! and so differently are they shewn! but actions are visible, though motives are secret. Cowley certainly retired; first to Barn-Elms, and afterwards to Chertsey, in Surrey. He seems, however, to have lost part of his

dread of the *hum of men* *. He thought himself now safe enough from intrusion, without the defence of mountains and oceans; and, instead of seeking shelter in America, wisely went only so far from the bustle of life as that he might easily find his way back, when solitude should grow tedious. His retreat was at first but slenderly accommodated; yet he soon obtained, by the interest of the earl of St Alban's and the Duke of Buckingham, such a lease of the Queen's lands as afforded him an ample income.

By the lovers of virtue and of wit it will be solicitously asked, if he now was happy. Let them peruse one of his letters accidentally preserved by Peck, which I recommend to the consideration of all that may hereafter pant for solitude.

"To Dr Thomas Sprat.

"*Chertsey, May* 21, 1665.

"The first night that I came hither I caught "so great a cold, with a defluxion of rheum, as "made me keep my chamber ten days. And, two "after, had such a bruise on my ribs with a fall, "that I am yet unable to move or turn myself in "my bed. This is my personal fortune here to "begin with. And, besides, I can get no mo- "ney from my tenants, and have my meadows "eaten up every night by cattle put in by my "neighbours. What this signifies, or may come "to in time, God knows; if it be ominous, it can "end in nothing less than hanging. Another

* L'Allegro of Milton.

" misfortune has been, and stranger than all the " rest, that you have broke your word with me, " and failed to come, even though you told Mr " Bois that you would. This is what they call " *Monstri simile.* I do hope to recover my late " hurt so farre within five or six days (though it be " uncertain yet whether I shall ever recover it), as " to walk about again. And then, methinks, " you and I and *the Dean*, might be very merry " upon St Ann's Hill. You might very conve- " niently come hither the way of Hampton Town, " lying there one night. I write this in pain, and " can say no more : *Verbum sapienti.*"

He did not long enjoy the pleasure or suffer the uneasiness of solitude ; for he died at the Porch-house * in Chertsey, in 1667, in the 49th year of his age.

He was buried with great pomp near Chaucer and Spenser; and king Charles pronounced, " That " Mr Cowley had not left behind him a better " man in England." He is represented by Dr Sprat as the most amiable of mankind ; and this posthumous praise may safely be credited, as it has never been contradicted by envy or by faction.

Such are the remarks and memorials which I have been able to add to the narrative of Dr Sprat; who, writing when the feuds of the civil war were yet recent, and the minds of either party were easily irritated, was obliged to pass over many transactions in general expressions, and to leave curiosity often unsatisfied. What he did not tell, can-

* Now in the possession of Mr Clarke, Alderman of London.

not, however, now be known; I must therefore recommend the perusal of his work, to which my narration can be considered only as a slender supplement.

COWLEY, like other poets who have written with narrow views, and, instead of tracing intellectual pleasures in the minds of men, paid their court to temporary prejudices, has been at one time too much praised, and too much neglected at another.

Wit, like all other things subject by their nature to the choice of man, has its changes and fashions, and at different times takes different forms. About the beginning of the seventeenth century, appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets; of whom, in a criticism on the works of Cowley, it is not improper to give some account.

The metaphysical poets were men of learning, and to shew their learning was their whole endeavour: but, unluckily resolving to shew it in rhyme, instead of writing poetry they only wrote verses, and very often such verses as stood the trial of the finger better than of the ear; for the modulation was so imperfect, that they were only found to be verses by counting the syllables.

If the father of criticism has rightly denominated poetry τέχνη μιμητικὴ, *an imitative art*, these writers will, without great wrong, lose their right to the name of poets; for they cannot be said to have imitated any thing; they neither copied nature nor life; neither painted the forms of matter, nor represented the operations of intellect.

Those, however, who deny them to be poets, allow them to be wits. Dryden confesses of him-

self and his contemporaries, that they fall below Donne in wit; but maintains, that they surpass him in poetry.

If wit be well described by Pope, as being "that which has been often thought, but was never before so well expressed," they certainly never attained, nor ever sought it; for they endeavoured to be singular in their thoughts, and were careless of their diction. But Pope's account of wit is undoubtedly erroneous: he depresses it below its natural dignity, and reduces it from strength of thought to happiness of language.

If by a more noble and more adequate conception that be considered as wit which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is, upon its first production, acknowledged to be just; if it be that which he that never found it wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness of industry they were ever found.

But wit, abstracted from its effects upon the hearer, may be more rigorously and philosophically considered as a kind of *discordia concors;* a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Of wit, thus defined, they have more than enough. The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions; their learning instructs, and their subtlety surprises; but the

reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought, and, though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased.

From this account of their compositions it will be readily inferred, that they were not successful in representing or moving the affections. As they were wholly employed on something unexpected and surprising, they had no regard to that uniformity of sentiment, which enables us to conceive and to excite the pains and the pleasure of other minds: they never inquired what, on any occasion, they should have said or done; but wrote rather as beholders than partakers of human nature; as beings looking upon good and evil, impassive and at leisure; as epicurean deities, making remarks on the actions of men, and the vicissitudes of life, without interest and without emotion. Their courtship was void of fondness, and their lamentation of sorrow. Their wish was only to say what they hoped had been never said before.

Nor was the sublime more within their reach than the pathetick; for they never attempted that comprehension and expanse of thought which at once fills the whole mind, and of which the first effect is sudden astonishment, and the second rational admiration. Sublimity is produced by aggregation, and littleness by dispersion. Great thoughts are always general, and consist in positions not limited by exceptions, and in descriptions not descending to minuteness. It is with great propriety that Subtlety, which in its original import means exility of particles, is taken in its metaphorical meaning for nicety of distinction. Those writers who lay on the watch for novelty could

have little hope of greatness: for great things cannot have escaped former observation. Their attempts were always analytick; they broke every image into fragments; and could no more represent, by their slender conceits and laboured particularities, the prospects of nature, or the scenes of life, than he who dissects a sun-beam with a prism can exhibit the wide effulgence of a summer noon.

What they wanted however of the sublime, they endeavoured to supply by hyperbole; their amplification had no limits; they left not only reason but fancy behind them; and produced combinations of confused magnificence, that not only could not be credited, but could not be imagined.

Yet great labour, directed by great abilities, is never wholly lost; if they frequently threw away their wit upon false conceits, they likewise sometimes struck out unexpected truth: if their conceits were far-fetched, they were often worth the carriage. To write on their plan it was at least necessary to read and think. No man could be born a metaphysical poet, nor assume the dignity of a writer, by descriptions copied from descriptions, by imitations borrowed from imitations, by traditional imagery, and hereditary similies, by readiness of rhyme, and volubility of syllables.

In perusing the works of this race of authors, the mind is exercised either by recollection or inquiry: either something already learned is to be retrieved, or something new is to be examined. If their greatness seldom elevates, their acuteness often surprises; if the imagination is not always gratified, at least the powers of reflection and comparison are employed; and in the mass of materials

which ingenious absurdity has thrown together, genuine wit and useful knowledge may be sometimes found buried perhaps in grossness of expression, but useful to those who know their value; and such as, when they are expanded to perspicuity, and polished to elegance, may give lustre to works which have more propriety though less copiousness of sentiment.

This kind of writing, which was, I believe, borrowed from Marino and his followers, had been recommended by the example of Donne, a man of very extensive and various knowledge; and by Jonson, whose manner resembled that of Donne more in the ruggedness of his lines than in the cast of his sentiments.

When their reputation was high, they had undoubtedly more imitators than time has left behind. Their immediate successors, of whom any remembrance can be said to remain, were Suckling, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Cleveland, and Milton. Denham and Waller sought another way to fame, by improving the harmony of our numbers. Milton tried the metaphysic style only in his lines upon Hobson the Carrier. Cowley adopted it, and excelled his predecessors, having as much sentiment and more musick. Suckling neither improved versification, nor abounded in conceits. The fashionable style remained chiefly with Cowley; Suckling could not reach it, and Milton disdained it.

CRITICAL REMARKS are not easily understood without examples; and I have therefore collected

instances of the modes of writing by which this species of poets (for poets they were called by themselves and their admirers) was eminently distinguished.

As the authors of this race were perhaps more desirous of being admired than understood, they sometimes drew their conceits from recesses of learning not very much frequented by common readers of poetry. Thus Cowley on *Knowledge*,

> The sacred tree 'midst the fair orchard grew;
> The phœnix Truth did on it rest,
> And built his perfum'd nest,
> That right Porphyrian tree which did true logic shew.
> Each leaf did learned notions give,
> And th' apples were demonstrative;
> So clear their colour and divine,
> The very shade they cast did other lights outshine.

On Anacreon continuing a lover in his old age:

> Love was with thy life entwin'd,
> Close as heat with fire is join'd;
> A powerful brand prescrib'd the date
> Of thine, like Meleager's fate.
> Th' antiperistasis of age
> More enflam'd thy amorous rage.

In the following verses we have an allusion to a Rabbinical opinion concerning Manna:

> Variety I ask not: give me one
> To live perpetually upon.
> The person Love does to us fit,
> Like manna, has the taste of all in it.

Thus Donne shews his medicinal knowledge in some encomiastic verses:

In every thing there naturally grows
A Balsamum to keep it fresh and new,
If 'twere not injur'd by extrinsique blows;
Your youth and beauty are this balm in you.
But you, of learning and religion,
And virtue and such ingredients, have made
A mithridate, whose operation
Keeps off, or cures what can be done or said.

Though the following lines of Donne, on the last night of the year, have something in them too scholastick, they are not inelegant:

This twilight of two years, not past nor next,
Some emblem is of me, or I of this,
Who, meteor-like, of stuff and form perplext,
Whose what and where in disputation is,
If I should call me any thing, should miss.
I sum the years and me, and find me not
Debtor to th' old, nor creditor to th' new.
That cannot say, my thanks I have forgot,
Nor trust I this with hopes; and yet scarce true
This bravery is, since these times shewed me you.

DONNE.

Yet more abstruse and profound is Donne's reflection upon Man as a Microcosm:

If men be worlds, there is in every one
Something to answer in some proportion;
All the world's riches: and in good men, this
Virtue, our form's form, and our soul's soul, is.

Of thoughts so far-fetched, as to be not only unexpected, but unnatural, all their books are full.

To a Lady, who wrote poesies for rings:

'They, who above do various circles find,
Say, like a ring, th' equator Heaven does bind.
When Heaven shall be adorned by thee,
(Which then more Heaven than 'tis will be)
'Tis thou must write the poesy there,
For it wanteth one as yet,
Then the sun pass through't twice a year,
The sun, which is esteemed the god of wit.

COWLEY.

The difficulties which have been raised about identity in philosophy, are by Cowley, with still more perplexity, applied to Love:

Five years ago (says story) I loved you,
For which you call me most inconstant now;
Pardon me, madam, you mistake the man;
For I am not the same that I was then;
No flesh is now the same 'twas then in me,
And that my mind is chang'd yourself may see.
The same thoughts to retain still, and intents,
Were more inconstant far: for accidents
Must of all things most strangely inconstant prove,
If from one subject they t'another move;
My members then, the father members were
From whence these take their birth, which now are here.
If then this body love what th' other did,
'Twere incest, which by nature is forbid.

The love of different women is, in geographical poetry, compared to travels through different countries:

Hast thou not found each woman's breast
(The land where thou hast travelled)

Either by savages possest,
Or wild, and uninhabited?
What joy could'st take, or what repose,
In countries so unciviliz'd as those?
Lust, the scorching dog-star, here
Rages with immoderate heat;
Whilst pride, the rugged Northern bear,
In others makes the cold too great.
And where these are temperate known,
The soil's all barren sand, or rocky stone.

COWLEY.

A lover, burnt up by his affection, is compared to Egypt:

The fate of Egypt I sustain,
And never feel the dew of rain
From clouds which in the head appear;
But all my too much moisture owe
To overflowings of the heart below.

COWLEY.

The lover supposes his lady acquainted with the ancient laws of augury and rites of sacrifice:

And yet this death of mine, I fear,
Will ominous to her appear:
When sound in every other part,
Her sacrifice is found without an heart.
For the last tempest of my death
Shall sigh out that too, with my breath.

That the chaos was harmonized, has been recited of old; but whence the different sounds arose remained for a modern to discover:

Th' ungovern'd parts no correspondence knew;
An artless war from thwarting motions grew;
Till they to number and fixt rules were brought.
Water and air he for the Tenor chose,
Earth made the Base; the Treble, flame arose.

COWLEY.

The tears of lovers are always of great poetical account; but Donne has extended them into worlds. If the lines are not easily understood, they may be read again.

On a round ball,
A workman, that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that which was nothing all.
So doth each tear,
Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mixt with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee my heaven dissolved so.

On reading the following lines, the reader may perhaps cry out—*Confusion worse confounded!*

Here lies a she sun, and a he moon here,
She gives the best light to his sphere,
Or each is both, and all, and so
They unto one another nothing owe.

DONNE.

Who but Donne would have thought that a good man is a telescope?

Though God be our true glass through which we see
All, since the being of all things is he,
Yet are the trunks, which do to us derive
Things in proportion fit, by perspective
Deeds of good men; for by their living here,
Virtues, indeed remote, seem to be near.

Who would imagine it possible, that in a very

:w lines so many remote ideas could be brought)gether?

Since 'tis my doom, Love's undershrieve,
Why this reprieve?
Why doth my she advowson fly
Incumbency?
To sell thyself dost thou intend
By candles end,
And hold the contrast thus in doubt,
Life's taper out?
Think but how soon the market fails,
Your sex lives faster than the males;
And if to measure age's span,
The sober Julian were th' account of man,
Whilst you live by the fleet Gregorian.

CLIEVELAND.

Of enormous and disgusting hyberboles, these ıay be examples:

By every wind that comes this way,
Send me at least a sigh or two,
Such and so many I'll repay
As shall themselves make winds to get to you.

COWLEY.

In tears I'll waste these eyes,
By Love so vainly fed;
So lust of old the Deluge punished.

COWLEY.

All arm'd in brass, the richest dress of war,
(A dismal glorious sight!) he shone afar.
The sun himself started with sudden fright,
To see his beams return so dismal bright.

COWLEY.

An universal consternation:

His bloody eyes he hurls round, his sharp paws
Tear up the ground; then runs he wild about,
Lashing his angry tail and roaring out.
Beasts creep into their dens, and tremble there;
Trees, though no wind is stirring, shake with fear;
Silence and horror fill the place around;
Echo itself dares scarce repeat to the sound.

COWLEY.

THEIR fictions were often violent and unnatural.

Of his Mistress bathing:

The fish around her crowded, as they do
To the false light that treacherous fishers shew,
And all with as much ease might taken be,
As she at first took me:
For ne'er did light so clear
Among the waves appear,
Though every night the sun himself set there.

COWLEY.

The poetical effect of a lover's name upon glass:

My name engrav'd herein
Doth contribute my firmness to this glass;
Which, ever since that charm, hath been
As hard as that which grav'd it was.

DONNE.

THEIR conceits were sentiments slight and trifling.

On an inconstant woman:

He enjoys the calmy sunshine now,
And no breath stirring hears,

In the clear heaven of thy brow,
No smallest cloud appears.
He sees thee gentle, fair and gay,
And trusts the faithless April of thy May.

COWLEY.

Upon a paper written with the juice of lemon, and read by the fire:

Nothing yet in thee is seen,
But when a genial heat warms thee within,
A new-born wood of various lines there grows;
Here buds an L, and there a B,
Here spouts a V, and there a T,
And all the flourishing letters stand in rows.

COWLEY.

As they sought only for novelty, they did not much inquire whether their allusions were to things high or low, elegant or gross: whether they compared the little to the great, or the great to the little.

Physick and Chirurgery for a Lover:

Gently, ah gently, madam, touch
The wound, which you yourself have made;
That pain must needs be very much,
Which makes me of your hand afraid.
Cordials of pity give me now,
For I too weak of purgings grow.

COWLEY.

The World and a Clock:

Mahol th' inferior world's fantastic face
Thro' all the turns of matter's maze did trace;
Great Nature's well-set clock in pieces took;
On all the springs and smallest wheels did look
Of life and motion, and with equal art
Made up the whole again of every part.

COWLEY.

A coal-pit has not often found its poet; but, that it may not want its due honour, Cleiveland has paralleled it with the Sun:

The moderate value of our guiltless ore
Makes no man atheist, and no woman whore;
Yet why should hallow'd vestal's sacred shrine
Deserve more honour than a flaming mine?
These pregnant wombs of heat would fitter be,
Than a few embers, for a deity.
Had he our pits, the Persian would admire
No sun, but warm's devotion at our fire:
He'd leave the trotting whipster, and prefer
Our profound Vulcan 'bove that waggoner.
For wants he heat, or light? or would have store,
Or both? 'tis here: and what can suns give more?
Nay, what's the sun but, in a different name,
A coal-pit rampant, or a mine on flame!
Then let this truth reciprocally run,
The sun's heaven's coalery, and coals our sun.

Death, a Voyage:

No family
E'er rigg'd a soul for Heaven's discovery,
With whom more venturers might boldly dare
Venture their stakes, with him in joy to share.
DONNE.

THEIR thoughts and expressions were sometimes grossly absurd, and such as no figures or license can reconcile to the understanding.

A Lover neither dead nor alive:

Then down I laid my head
Down on cold earth; and for a while was dead,
And my freed soul to a strange somewhere fled.

Ah, sottish soul, said I,
When back to its cage again I saw it fly;
Fool to resume her broken chain,
And row her galley here again!
Fool, to that body to return
Where it condemn'd and destin'd is to burn!
Once dead, how can it be,
Death should a thing so pleasant seem to thee,
That thou should'st come to live it o'er again in me?

A Lover's heart a hand grenado:

Wo to her stubborn heart, if once mine come
Into the self-same room;
'Twill tear and blow up all within,
Like a grenado shot into a magazin.
Then shall Love keep the ashes, and torn parts,
Of both our broken hearts:
Shall out of both one new one make:
From her's th' allay, from mine the metal take.

COWLEY

The poetical Propagation of Light:

The prince's favour is diffus'd o'er all,
From which all fortunes, names, and natures fall.
Then from those wombs of stars, the Bride's bright eyes,
At every glance a constellation flies,
And sowes the court with stars, and doth prevent,
In light and power, the all-ey'd firmament:
First her eye kindles other ladies' eyes,
Then from their beams their jewels' lustres rise:
And from their jewels torches do take fire,
And all is warmth, and light, and good desire.

DONNE.

THEY were in very little care to clothe their notions with elegance of dress, and therefore miss the notice and the praise which are often gained by those who think less, but are more diligent to adorn their thoughts.

That a mistress beloved is fairer in idea than in reality, is by Cowley thus expressed:

Thou in my fancy dost much higher stand,
Than woman can be plac'd by Nature's hand;
And I must needs, I'm sure, a loser be,
To change thee as thou'rt there, for very thee.

That prayer and labour should co-operate, are thus taught by Donne:

In none but us are such mix'd engines found,
As hands of double office; for the ground
We till with them; and them to heaven we raise;
Who prayerless labours, or, without this, prays,
Doth but one half, that's none.

By the same author, a common topick, the danger of procrastination is thus illustrated:

———That which I should have begun
In my youth's morning, now late must be done;
And I, as giddy travellers must do,
Which stray or sleep all day, and having lost
Light and strength, dark and tir'd, must then ride post.

All that man has to do is to live and die; the sum of humanity is comprehended by Donne in the following lines:

Think in how poor a prison thou didst lie;
After enabled but to suck and cry.
Think, when 'twas grown to most, 'twas a poor inn,
A province pack'd up in two yards of skin,
And that usurp'd, or threaten'd with a rage
Of sicknesses, or their true mother, age.
But think that death hath now enfranchis'd thee;
Thou hast thy expansion now, and liberty;
Think, that a rusty piece discharg'd is flown
In pieces, and the bullet is his own,

And freely flies: this to thy soul allow,
Think thy shell broke, think thy soul hatch'd but now.

THEY were sometimes indelicate and disgusting. Cowley thus apostrophises beauty:

——Thou tyrant, which leav'st no man free!
Thou subtle thief, from whom nought safe can be!
Thou murtherer, which hast kill'd, and devil, which
would'st damn me!

Thus he addresses his Mistress:

Thou who, in many a propriety,
So truely art the sun to me,
Add one more likeness, which I'm sure you can,
And let me and my sun beget a man.

Thus he represents the meditations of a Lover:

Though in thy thoughts scarce any tracts have been
So much as of original sin,
Such charms thy beauty wears, as might
Desires in dying confest saints excite.
Thou with strange adultery
Dost in each breast a brothel keep;
Awake, all men do lust for thee,
And some enjoy thee when they sleep.

The true taste of Tears:

Hither with crystal vials, lovers, come,
And take my tears, which are love's wine,
And try your mistress' tears at home;
For all are false, that taste not just like mine.

DONNE.

This is yet more indelicate:

As the sweet sweat of roses in a still,
As that which from chaf'd musk-cat's pores doth trill,
As the almighty balm of th' early East;
Such are the sweet drops of my mistress' breast.
And on her neck her skin such lustre sets,
They seem no sweat-drops, but pearl coronets;
Rank, sweaty froth thy mistress' brow defiles.

DONNE.

THEIR expressions sometimes raise horror, when they intend perhaps to be pathetick:

As men in hell are from diseases free,
So from all other ills am I,
Free from their known formality;
But all pains eminently lie in thee.

COWLEY.

They were not always strictly curious, whether the opinions from which they drew their illustrations were true; it was enough that they were popular. Bacon remarks, that some falsehoods are continued by tradition, because they supply commodious allusions.

It gave a piteous groan, and so it broke;
In vain it something would have spoke:
The love within too strong for't was,
Like poison put into a Venice-glass.

COWLEY.

In forming descriptions, they looked out not for images, but for conceits. Night has been a common subject, which poets have contended to adorn

Dryden's Night is well known; Donne's is as follows:

Thou seest me here at midnight, now all rest:
Time's dead low-water; when all minds divest
To-morrow's business; when the labourers have
Such rest in bed, that their last church-yard grave,
Subject to change, will scarce be a type of this;
Now when the client, whose last hearing is
To-morrow, sleeps; when the condemned man,
Who, when he opes his eyes, must shut them then
Again by death, although sad watch he keep,
Doth practice dying by a little sleep;
Thou at this midnight seest me.

It must be however confessed of these writers, that if they are upon common subjects often unnecessarily and unpoetically subtle; yet, where scholastick speculation can be properly admitted, their copiousness and acuteness may justly be admired. What Cowley has written upon Hope shews an unequalled fertility of invention:

Hope, whose weak being ruin'd is,
Alike if it succeed and if it miss;
Whom good or ill does equally confound,
And both the horns of Fate's dilemma wound;
Vain shadow! which dost vanish quite,
Both at full noon and perfect night!
The stars have not a possibility
Of blessing thee;
If things then from their end we happy call,
'Tis Hope is the most hopeless thing o

Hope, thou bold taster of delight
Who, whilst thou should'st but
Thou bring'st us an estate, yet l
By clogging it with legacies bef

Yet 'tis not to adorn and gild each part,
That shews more cost than art.
Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
Rather than all things wit, let none be there.
Several lights will not be seen,
If there be nothing else between.
Men doubt, because they stand so thick i' th' sky,
If those be stars which paint the galaxy.

In his verses to Lord Falkland, whom every man of his time was proud to praise, there are, as there must be in all Cowley's compositions, some striking thoughts, but they are not well wrought. His elegy on Sir Henry Wotton is vigorous and happy; the series of thoughts is easy and natural; and the conclusion, though a little weakened by the intrusion of Alexander, is elegant and forcible.

It may be remarked, that in this elegy, and in most of his encomiastick poems, he has forgotten or neglected to name his heroes.

In his poem on the death of Hervey, there is much praise, but little passion; a very just and ample delineation of such virtues as a studious privacy admits, and such intellectual excellence as a mind not yet called forth to action can display. He knew how to distinguish, and how to commend, the qualities of his companion; but, when he wishes to make us weep, he forgets to weep himself, and diverts his sorrow by imagining how his crown of bays, if he had it, would *crackle* in the *fire*. It is the odd fate of this thought to be the worse for being true. The bay-leaf crackles remarkably as it burns; as therefore this property was not assigned it by chance, the mind must be thought sufficiently at ease that could attend to

such minuteness of physiology. But the power of Cowley is not so much to move the affections, as to exercise the understanding.

The *Chronicle* is a composition unrivalled and alone: such gaiety of fancy, such facility of expression, such varied similitude, such a succession of images, and such a dance of words, it is in vain to expect except from Cowley. His strength always appears in his agility; his volatility is not the flutter of a light, but the bound of an elastick mind. His levity never leaves his learning behind it; the moralist, the politician, and the critick, mingle their influence even in this airy frolick of genius. To such a performance Suckling could have brought the gaiety, but not the knowledge; Dryden could have supplied the knowledge, but not the gaiety.

The verses to Davenant, which are vigorously begun, and happily concluded, contain some hints of criticism very justly conceived, and happily expressed. Cowley's critical abilities have not been sufficiently observed: the few decisions and remarks, which his prefaces and his notes on the Davideis supply, were at that time accessions to English literature, and shew such skill as raises our wish for more examples.

The lines from Jersey are a very curious and pleasing specimen of the familiar descending to the burlesque.

His two metrical disquisitions *for* and *against* Reason are no mean specimens of metaphysical poetry. The stanzas against knowledge produce little conviction. In those which are intended to exalt the human faculties, Reason has its proper

task assigned it; that of judging, not of things revealed, but of the reality of revelation. In the verses *for* Reason is a passage which Bentley, in the only English verses which he is known to have written, seems to have copied, though with the inferiority of an imitator.

> The Holy Book like the eighth sphere doth shine
> With thousand lights of truth divine,
> So numberless the stars, that to our eye
> It makes all but one galaxy.
> Yet Reason must assist too; for, in seas
> So vast and dangerous as these,
> Our course by stars above we cannot know
> Without the compass too below.

After this says Bentley:

> Who travels in religious jars,
> Truth mix'd with error, shade with rays,
> Like Whiston wanting pyx or stars,
> In ocean wide or sinks or strays.

Cowley seems to have had what Milton is believed to have wanted, the skill to rate his own performances by their just value, and has therefore closed his Miscellanies with the verses upon Crashaw, which apparently excel all that have gone before them, and in which there are beauties which common authors may justly think not only above their attainment, but above their ambition.

To the Miscellanies succeed the *Anacreontiques*, or paraphrastical translations of some little poems, which pass, however justly, under the name of Anacreon. Of those songs dedicated to festivity and gaiety, in which even the morality is voluptu-

ous, and which teach nothing but the enjoyment of the present day, he has given rather a pleasing than a faithful representation, having retained their spriteliness, but lost their simplicity. The Anacreon of Cowley, like the Homer of Pope, has admitted the decoration of some modern graces, by which he is undoubtedly more amiable to common readers, and perhaps, if they would honestly declare their own perceptions, to far the greater part of those whom courtesy and ignorance are content to style the learned.

These little pieces will be found more finished in their kind than any other of Cowley's works. The diction shews nothing of the mould of time, and the sentiments are at no great distance from our present habitudes of thought. Real mirth must always be natural, and nature is uniform. Men have been wise in very different modes; but they have always laughed the same way.

Levity of thought naturally produced familiarity of language, and the familiar part of language continues long the same: the dialogue of comedy, when it is transcribed from popular manners and real life, is read from age to age with equal pleasure. The artifices of inversion, by which the established order of words is changed, or of innovation, by which new words or meanings of words are introduced, is practised, not by those who talk to be understood, but by those who write to be admired.

The Anacreontiques, therefore, of Cowley, give now all the pleasure which they ever gave. If he was formed by nature for one kind of writing more

than for another, his power seems to have been greatest in the familiar and the festive.

The next class of his poems is called *The Mistress*, of which it is not necessary to select any particular pieces for praise or censure. They have all the same beauties and faults, and nearly in the same proportion. They are written with exuberance of wit, and with copiousness of learning; and it is truly asserted by Sprat, that the plenitude of the writer's knowledge flows in upon his page, so that the reader is commonly surprized into some improvement. But, considered as the verses of a lover, no man that has ever loved will much commend them. They are neither courtly nor pathetick, have neither gallantry nor fondness. His praises are too far sought, and too hyperbolical, either to express love, or to excite it; every stanza is crowded with darts and flames, with wounds and death, with mingled souls and with broken hearts.

The principal artifice by which *The Mistress* is filled with conceits is very copiously displayed by Addison. Love is by Cowley, as by other poets, expressed metaphorically by flame and fire; and that which is true of real fire is said of love, or figurative fire, the same word in the same sentence retaining both significations. Thus, "observing "the cold regard of his mistress's eyes, and at the "same time their power of producing love in him, "he considers them as burning-glasses made of "ice. Finding himself able to live in the greatest "extremities of love, he concludes the torrid zone "to be habitable. Upon the dying of a tree on

" which he had cut his loves, he observes that his " flames had burnt up and withered the tree."

These conceits Addison calls mixed wit; that is, wit which consists of thoughts true in one sense of the expression, and false in the other. Addison's representation is sufficiently indulgent: that confusion of images may entertain for a moment; but, being unnatural, it soon grows wearisome. Cowley delighted in it, as much as if he had invented it; but, not to mention the ancients, he might have found it full-blown in modern Italy. Thus Sannazaro:

Aspice quam variis distringar Lesbia curis!
Uror, & heu! nostro manat ab igne liquor:
Sum Nilus, sumque Ætna simul; restringite flammas
O lacrimæ, aut lacrimas ebibe flamma meas.

One of the severe theologians of that time censured him as having published *a book of profane and lascivious verses*. From the charge of profaneness, the constant tenour of his life, which seems to have been eminently virtuous, and the general tendency of his opinions, which discover no irreverence of religion, must defend him; but that the accusation of lasciviousness is unjust, the perusal of his works will sufficiently evince.

Cowley's *Mistress* has no power of seduction: she " plays round the head, but reaches not the heart." Her beauty and absence, her kindness and cruelty, her disdain and inconstancy, produce no correspondence of emotion. His poetical account of the virtues of plants, and colours of flowers, is not perused with more sluggish frigidity. The compositions are such as might have been written for penance by a hermit, or for hire by a philoso-

phical rhymer who had only heard of another sex; for they turn the mind only on the writer, whom, without thinking on a woman but as the subject for his task, we sometimes esteem as learned, and sometimes despise as trifling, always admire as ingenious, and always condemn as unnatural.

The Pindarique Odes are now to be considered; a species of composition, which Cowley thinks Pancirolus might have counted in *his list of the lost inventions of antiquity*, and which he has made a bold and vigorous attempt to recover.

The purpose with which he has paraphrased an Olympick and Nemæan Ode is by himself sufficiently explained. His endeavour was, not to shew *precisely what Pindar spoke, but his manner of speaking*. He was therefore not at all restrained to his expressions, nor much to his sentiments; nothing was required of him, but not to write as Pindar would not have written.

Of the Olympick Ode, the beginning is, I think, above the original in elegance, and the conclusion below it in strength. The connection is supplied with great perspicuity; and the thoughts, which to a reader of less skill seem thrown together by chance, are concatenated without any abruption. Though the English ode cannot be called a translation, it may be very properly consulted as a commentary.

The spirit of Pindar is indeed not every where equally preserved. The following pretty lines are not such as his *deep mouth* was used to pour:

> Great Rhea's son,
> If in Olympus' top, where thou
> Sitt'st to behold thy sacred show,

If in Alpheus' silver flight,
If in my verse thou take delight,
My verse, great Rhea's son, which is
Lofty as that and smooth as this.

In the Nemæan ode, the reader must, in mere justice to Pindar, observe, that whatever is said of *the original new moon, her tender forehead and her horns*, is superadded by his paraphrast, who has many other plays of words and fancy unsuitable to the original, as,

The table, free for ev'ry guest,
No doubt will thee admit,
And feast more upon thee, than thou on it.

He sometimes extends his author's thoughts without improving them. In the Olympionick an oath is mentioned in a single word, and Cowley spends three lines in swearing by the *Castalian Stream*. We are told of Theron's bounty, with a hint that he had enemies, which Cowley thus enlarges in rhyming prose:

But in this thankless world the giver
Is envied even by the receiver;
'Tis now the cheap and frugal fashion
Rather to hide than own the obligation:
Nay, 'tis much worse than so;
It now an artifice does grow
Wrongs and injuries to do,
Lest men should think we owe.

It is hard to conceive that a man of the first rank in learning and wit, when he was dealing out such minute morality in such feeble diction, could imagine, either waking or dreaming, that he imitated Pindar.

In the following odes, where Cowley chooses his own subjects, he sometimes rises to dignity truly Pindarick; and, if some deficiencies of language be forgiven, his strains are such as those of the Theban bard were to his contemporaries:

Begin the song, and strike the living lyre:
Lo how the years to come, a numerous and well-fitted quire,
All hand in hand do decently advance,
And to my song with smooth and equal measure dance;
While the dance lasts, how long soe'er it be,
My musick's voice shall bear it company;
Till all gentle notes be drown'd
In the last trumpet's dreadful sound.

After such enthusiasm, who will not lament to find the poet conclude with lines like these:

But stop, my Muse—
Hold thy Pindarick Pegasus closely in,
Which does to rage begin—
—'Tis an unruly and a hard-mouth'd horse—
'Twill no unskilful touch endure,
But flings writer and reader too that sits not sure.

The fault of Cowley, and perhaps of all the writers of the metaphysical race, is that of pursuing his thoughts to the last ramifications, by which he loses the grandeur of generality; for of the greatest things the parts are little; what is little can be but pretty, and by claiming dignity becomes ridiculous. Thus all the power of description is destroyed by a scrupulous enumeration, and the force of metaphors is lost, when the mind by the mention of particulars is turned more upon the original than the secondary sense, more upon that from which the illustration is drawn than that to which it is applied.

Of this we have a very eminent example in the ode intituled *The Muse*, who goes to *take the air* in an intellectual chariot, to which he harnesses Fancy and Judgment, Wit and Eloquence, Memory and Invention: how he distinguished Wit from Fancy, or how Memory could properly contribute to motion, he has not explained: we are, however, content to suppose that he could have justified his own fiction, and wish to see the Muse begin her career; but there is yet more to be done.

> Let the *postillion* Nature mount, and let
> The *coachman* Art be set;
> And let the airy *footmen*, running all beside,
> Make a long row of goodly pride;
> Figures, conceits, raptures, and sentences,
> In a well-worded dress,
> And innocent loves, and pleasant truths, and useful lies,
> In all their gaudy *liveries*.

Every mind is now disgusted with this cumber of magnificence; yet I cannot refuse myself the four next lines:

> Mount, glorious queen, thy traveling throne,
> And bid it to put on;
> For long though chearful is the way,
> And life, alas! allows but one ill winter's day.

In the same ode, celebrating the power of the Muse, he gives her prescience, or, in poetical language, the foresight of events hatching in futurity; but, having once an egg in his mind, he cannot forbear to shew us that he knows what an egg contains:

> Thou into the close nests of Time dost peep,
> And there with piercing eye

Through the firm shell and the thick white dost spy
Years to come a-forming lie,
Close in their sacred fecundine asleep.

The same thought is more generally, and therefore more poetically expressed by Casimer, a writer who has many of the beauties and faults of Cowley:

Omnibus mundi Dominator horis
Aptat urgendas per inane pennas,
Pars adhuc nido latet, & futuros
Crescit in annos.

Cowley, whatever was his subject, seems to have been carried, by a kind of destiny, to the light and the familiar, or to conceits which require still more ignoble epithets. A slaughter in the Red Sea *new dies the waters name;* and England, during the civil war, was *Albion no more, nor to be named from white.* It is surely by some fascination not easily surmounted, that a writer, professing to revive *the noblest and highest writing in verse,* makes this address to the new year:

Nay, if thou lov'st me, gentle year,
Let not so much as love be there,
Vain, fruitless love I mean; for, gentle year,
Although I fear
There's of this caution little need,
Yet, gentle year, take heed
How thou dost make
Such a mistake;
Such love I mean alone
As by thy cruel predecessors has been shewn:
For, though I have too much cause to doubt it,
I fain would try, for once, if life can live without it.

The reader of this will be inclined to cry out with Prior—

Ye Criticks, say,
How poor to this was Pindar's style!

Even those who cannot perhaps find in the Isthmian or Nemæan songs what antiquity has disposed them to expect, will at least see that they are ill represented by such puny poetry; and all will determine that if this be the old Theban strain, it is not worthy of revival.

To the disproportion and incongruity of Cowley's sentiments must be added the uncertainty and looseness of his measures. He takes the liberty of using in any place a verse of any length, from two syllables to twelve. The verses of Pindar have, as he observes, very little harmony to a modern ear; yet by examining the syllables we perceive them to be regular, and have reason enough for supposing that the ancient audiences were delighted with the sound. The imitator ought therefore to have adopted what he found, and to have added what was wanting; to have preserved a constant return of the same numbers, and to have supplied smoothness of transition and continuity of thought.

It is urged by Dr Sprat, that the *irregularity of numbers is the very thing* which makes *that kind of poesy fit for all manner of subjects.* But he should have remembered, that what is fit for every thing can fit nothing well. The great pleasure of verse arises from the known measure of the lines, and uniform structure of the stanzas, by which the voice is regulated, and the memory relieved.

If the Pindarick style be, what Cowley thinks it, *the highest and noblest kind of writing in verse*, it can be adapted only to high and noble subjects; and it will not be easy to reconcile the poet with the critick, or to conceive how that can be the highest kind of writing in verse, which, according to Sprat, *is chiefly to be preferred for its near affinity to prose.*

This lax and lawless versification so much concealed the deficiencies of the barren, and flattered the laziness of the idle, that it immediately overspread our books of poetry; all the boys and girls caught the pleasing fashion, and they that could do nothing else could write like Pindar. The rights of antiquity were invaded, and disorder tried to break into the Latin: a poem on the Sheldonian Theatre, in which all kinds of verse are shaken together, is unhappily inserted in the *Musæ Anglicanæ*. Pindarism prevailed about half a century; but at last died gradually away, and other imitations supply its place.

The Pindarick Odes have so long enjoyed the highest degree of poetical reputation, that I am not willing to dismiss them with unabated censure; and surely though the mode of their composition be erroneous, yet many parts deserve at least that admiration which is due to great comprehension of knowledge, and great fertility of fancy. The thoughts are often new, and often striking; but the greatness of one part is disgraced by the littleness of another; and total negligence of language gives the noblest conceptions the appearance of a fabrick august in the plan, but mean in the materials. Yet surely those verses are not without

a just claim to praise; of which it may be said with truth, that no man but Cowley could have written them.

The Davideis now remains to be considered; a poem which the author designed to have extended to twelve books, merely, as he makes no scruple of declaring, because the Æneid had that number; but he had leisure or perseverance only to write the third part. Epick poems have been left unfinished by Virgil, Statius, Spenser, and Cowley. That we have not the whole Davideis is, however, not much to be regretted; for in this undertaking Cowley is, tacitly at least, confessed to have miscarried. There are not many examples of so great a work, produced by an author generally read, and generally praised, that has crept through a century with so little regard. Whatever is said of Cowley, is meant of his other works. Of the Davideis no mention is made; it never appears in books, nor emerges in conversation. By the *Spectator* it has been once quoted; by *Rymer* it has once been praised; and by *Dryden*, in "Mac Flecknoe," it has once been imitated; nor do I recollect much other notice, from its publication till now, in the whole succession of English literature.

Of this silence and neglect, if the reason be inquired, it will be found partly in the choice of the subject, and partly in the performance of the work.

Sacred History has been always read with submissive reverence, and an imagination overawed and controlled. We have been accustomed to acquiesce in the nakedness and simplicity of the

authentic narrative, and to repose on its veracity with such humble confidence as suppresses curiosity. We go with the historian as he goes, and stop with him when he stops. All amplification is frivolous and vain; all addition to that which is already sufficient for the purposes of religion seems not only useless, but in some degree profane.

Such events as were produced by the visible interposition of Divine Power are above the power of human genius to dignify. The miracle of Creation, however it may teem with images, is best described with little diffusion of language: *He spake the word, and they were made.*

We are told that Saul *was troubled with an evil spirit;* from this Cowley takes an opportunity of describing Hell, and telling the history of Lucifer, who was, he says,

> Once general of a gilded host of sprites,
> Like Hesper leading forth the spangled nights;
> But down like light'ning, which him struck, he came,
> And roar'd at his first plunge into the flame.

Lucifer makes a speech to the inferior agents of mischief, in which there is something of Heathenism, and therefore of impropriety; and, to give efficacy to his words, concludes by lashing *his breast with his long tail.* Envy, after a pause, steps out, and, among other declarations of her zeal, utters these lines:

> Do thou but threat, loud storms shall make reply,
> And thunder echo to the trembling sky;
> Whilst raging seas swell to so bold an height,
> As shall the fire's proud element affright.

Th' old drudging Sun, from his long-beaten way,
Shall at thy voice start, and misguide the day.
The jocund orbs shall break their measur'd pace,
And stubborn poles change their allotted place.
Heaven's gilded troops shall flutter here and there,
Leaving their boasting songs tun'd to a sphere.

Every reader feels himself weary with this useless talk of an allegorical Being.

It is not only when the events are confessedly miraculous, that fancy and fiction lose their effect: the whole system of life, while the Theocracy was yet visible, has an appearance so different from all other scenes of human action, that the reader of the Sacred Volume habitually considers it as the peculiar mode of existence of a distinct species of mankind, that lived and acted with manners uncommunicable; so that it is difficult even for imagination to place us in the state of them whose story is related, and by consequence their joys and griefs are not easily adopted, nor can the attention be often interested in any thing that befalls them.

To the subject thus originally indisposed to the reception of poetical embellishments, the writer brought little that could reconcile impatience, or attract curiosity. Nothing can be more disgusting than a narrative spangled with conceits; and conceits are all that the Davideis supplies.

One of the great sources of poetical delight is description, or the power of presenting pictures to the mind. Cowley gives inferences instead of images, and shews not what may be supposed to have been seen, but what thoughts the sight might have

suggested. When Virgil describes the stone which Turnus lifted against Æneas, he fixes the attention on its bulk and weight:

Saxum circumspicit ingens,
Saxum antiquum, ingens, campo quod forte jacebat
Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

Cowley says of the stone with which Cain slew his brother,

I saw him fling the stone, as if he meant
At once his murther and his monument.

Of the sword taken from Goliah, he says,

A sword so great, that it was only fit
To cut off his great head that came with it.

Other poets describe Death by some of its common appearances. Cowley says, with a learned allusion to sepulchral lamps, real or fabulous.

'Twixt his right ribs deep pierc'd the furious blade,
And open'd wide those secret vessels where
Life's light goes out, when first they let in air.

But he has allusions vulgar as well as learned. In a visionary succession of kings:

Joas at first does bright and glorious shew,
In life's fresh morn his fame does early crow.

Describing an undisciplined army, after having said with elegance,

His forces seem'd no army, but a crowd,
Heartless, unarm'd, disorderly, and loud.

he gives them a fit of the ague.

The allusions, however, are not always to vulgar things; he offends by exaggeration as much as by diminution:

The king was plac'd alone, and o'er his head
A well-wrought heaven of silk and gold was spread.

Whatever he writes is always polluted with some conceit:

Where the sun's fruitful beams give metals birth,
Where he the growth of fatal gold does see,
Gold, which alone more influence has than he.

In one passage he starts a sudden question to the confusion of philosophy:

Ye learned heads, whom ivy garlands grace,
Why does that twining plant the oak embrace;
The oak for courtship most of all unfit,
And rough as are the winds that fight with it?

His expressions have sometimes a degree of meanness that surpasses expectation:

Nay, gentle guests, he cries, since now you're in,
The story of your gallant friend begin.

In a simile descriptive of the Morning:

As glimmering stars just at the approach of day,
Cashier'd by troops, at last drop all away.

The dress of Gabriel deserves attention:

He took for skin a cloud most soft and bright,
That e'er the mid-day sun pierc'd through with light;
Upon his cheeks a lively blush he spread,
Wash'd from the morning beauties' deepest red;
An harmless flatt'ring meteor shone for hair,
And fell adown his shoulders with loose care;
He cuts out a silk mantle from the skies,
Where the most sprightly azure pleas'd the eyes;
This he with starry vapours sprinkles all,
Took in their prime ere they grow ripe and fall;
Of a new rainbow ere it fret or fade,
The choicest piece cut out, a scarfe is made.

This is a just specimen of Cowley's imagery: what might in general expressions be great and forcible, he weakens and makes ridiculous by branching it into small parts. That Gabriel was invested with the softest or brighest colours of the sky, we might have been told, and been dismissed to improve the idea in our different proportions of conception; but Cowley could not let us go till he had related where Gabriel got first his skin, and then his mantle, then his lace, and then his scarfe, and related it in the terms of the mercer and tailor.

Sometimes he indulges himself in a digression, always conceived with his natural exuberance, and commonly, even where it is not long, continued till it is tedious:

I' th' library a few choice authors stood,
Yet 'twas well stor'd, for that small store was good;
Writing, man's spiritual physick, was not then
Itself, as now, grown a disease of men.

Learning (young virgin) but few suitors knew;
The common prostitute she lately grew,
And with the spurious brood loads now the press;
Laborious effects of idleness.

As the Davideis affords only four books, though intended to consist of twelve, there is no opportunity for such criticism as Epick poems commonly supply. The plan of the whole work is very imperfectly shewn by the third part. The duration of an unfinished action cannot be known. Of characters either not yet introduced, or shewn but upon few occasions, the full extent and the nice discriminations cannot be ascertained. The fable is plainly implex, formed rather from the Odyssey than the Iliad: and many artifices of diversification are employed, with the skill of a man acquainted with the best models. The past is recalled by narration, and the future anticipated by vision: but he has been so lavish of his poetical art, that it is difficult to imagine how he could fill eight books more without practising again the same modes of disposing his matter; and perhaps the perception of this growing incumbrance inclined him to stop. By this abruption, posterity lost more instruction than delight. If the continuation of the Davideis can be missed, it is for the learning that had been diffused over it, and the notes in which it had been explained.

Had not his characters been depraved, like every other part, by improper decorations, they would have deserved uncommon praise. He gives Saul both the body and mind of a hero:

His way once chose, he forward thrust outright,
Nor turn'd aside for danger or delight.

And the different beauties of the lofty Merah and the gentle Michol, are very justly conceived and strongly painted.

Rymer has declared the Davideis superior to the *Jerusalem* of Tasso, "which," says he, "the poet, "with all his care, has not totally purged from "pedantry." If by pedantry is meant that minute knowledge which is derived from particular sciences and studies, in opposition to the general notions supplied by a wide survey of life and nature, Cowley certainly errs, by introducing pedantry, far more frequently than Tasso. I know not, indeed, why they should be compared; for the resemblance of Cowley's work to Tasso's is only that they both exhibit the agency of celestial and infernal spirits, in which however they differ widely; for Cowley supposes them commonly to operate upon the mind by suggestion; Tasso represents them as promoting or obstructing events by external agency.

Of particular passages that can be properly compared, I remember only the description of Heaven, in which the different manner of the two writers is sufficiently discernible. Cowely's is scarcely description, unless it be possible to describe by negatives; for he tells us only what there is not in Heaven. Tasso endeavours to represent the splendours and pleasures of the regions of happiness. Tasso affords images, and Cowley sentiments. It happens, however, that Tasso's description affords some reason for Rymer's censure. He says of the Surpreme Being,

> Hà sotto i piedi e fato e la natura
> Ministri humili, e'l moto, e ch'il misura.

The second line has in it more of pedantry than perhaps can be found in any other stanza of the poem.

In the perusal of the Davideis, as of all Cowley's works, we find wit and learning unprofitably squandered. Attention has no relief; the affections are never moved; we are sometimes surprized, but never delighted, and find much to admire, but little to approve. Still however it is the work of Cowley, of a mind capacious by nature, and replenished by study.

In the general review of Cowley's poetry it will be found, that he wrote with abundant fertility, but negligent or unskilful selection; with much thought, but with little imagery; that he is never pathetick, and rarely sublime; but always either ingenious or learned, either acute or profound.

It is said by Denham in his elegy,

> To him no author was unknown,
> Yet what he writ was all his own.

This wide position requires less limitation, when it is affirmed of Cowley, than perhaps of any other poet.—He read much, and yet borrowed little.

His character of writing was indeed not his own: he unhappily adopted that which was predominant. He saw a certain way to present praise; and, not sufficiently inquiring by what means the ancients have continued to delight through all the changes of human manners, he contented himself with a deciduous laurel, of which the verdure in its spring was bright and gay, but which time has been continually stealing from his brows.

He was in his own time considered as of unrivalled excellence. Clarendon represents him as having taken a flight beyond all that went before him; and Milton is said to have declared, that the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakespeare, and Cowley.

His manner he had in common with others; but his sentiments were his own. Upon every subject he thought for himself; and such was his copiousness of knowledge, that something at once remote and applicable rushed into his mind; yet it is not likely that he always rejected a commodious idea merely because another had used it: his known wealth was so great that he might have borrowed without loss of credit.

In his elegy on Sir Henry Wotton, the last lines have such resemblance to the noble epigram of Grotius on the death of Scaliger, that I cannot but think them copied from it, though they are copied by no servile hand.

One passage in his *Mistress* is so apparently borrowed from Donne, that he probably would not have written it, had it not mingled with his own thoughts, so as that he did not perceive himself taking it from another:

Although I think thou never found wilt be,
  Yet I'm resolv'd to search for thee;
  The search itself rewards the pains.
So, though the chymic his great secret miss
(For neither it in art or nature is),
  Yet things well worth his toil he gains:
  And does his charge and labour pay
With good unsought experiments by the way.

COWLEY.

Some that have deeper digg'd Love's mine than I,
Say, where his centric happiness doth lie:
I have lov'd, and got, and told;
But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,
I should not find that hidden mystery;
Oh, 'tis imposture all!
And as no chymic yet th' elixir got,
But glorifies his pregnant pot,
If by the way to him befal
Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal,
So lovers dream a rich and long delight,
But get a winter-seeming summer's night.

Jonson and Donne, as Dr Hurd remarks, were then in the highest esteem.

It is related by Clarendon, that Cowley always acknowledged his obligation to the learning and industry of Jonson: but I have found no traces of Jonson in his works: to emulate Donne appears to have been his purpose; and from Donne he may have learned that familiarity with religious images, and that light allusion to sacred things, by which readers far short of sanctity are frequently offended; and which would not be borne in the present age, when devotion, perhaps not more fervent, is more delicate.

Having produced one passage taken by Cowley from Donne, I will recompense him by another which Milton seems to have borrowed from him. He says of Goliah,

His spear, the trunk was of a lofty tree,
Which nature meant some tall ship's mast should be.

Milton of Satan:

His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
He walked with.

His diction was in his own time censured as negligent. He seems not to have known, or not to have considered, that words being arbitrary must owe their power to association, and have the influence, and that only, which custom has given them. Language is the dress of thought: and as the noblest mien, or most graceful action, would be degraded and obscured by a garb appropriated to the gross employments of rusticks or mechanicks; so the most heroick sentiments will lose their efficacy, and the most splendid ideas drop their magnificence, if they are conveyed by words used commonly upon low and trivial occasions, debased by vulgar mouths, and contaminated by inelegant applications.

Truth indeed is always truth, and reason is always reason; they have an intrinsic and unalterable value, and constitute that intellectual gold which defies destruction; but gold may be so concealed in baser metal, that only a chymist can recover it; sense may be so hidden in unrefined and plebeian words, that none but philosophers can distinguish it; and both may be so buried in impurities, as not to pay the cost of their extraction.

The diction, being the vehicle of the thoughts, first presents itself to the intellectual eye: and if the first appearance offends, a further knowledge is not often sought. Whatever professes to benefit by pleasing, must please at once. The pleasures of the mind imply something sudden and unexpected; that which elevates must always surprize. What is perceived by slow degrees may gratify us with consciousness of improvement, but will never strike with the sense of pleasure.

Of all this, Cowley appears to have been without knowledge, or without care. He makes no selection of words, nor seeks any neatness of phrase: he has no elegancies either lucky or elaborate: as his endeavours were rather to impress sentences upon the understanding than images on the fancy; he has few epithets, and those scattered without peculiar propriety or nice adaptation. It seems to follow from the necessity of the subject, rather than the care of the writer, that the diction of his heroic poem is less familiar than that of his slightest writings. He has given not the same numbers, but the same diction, to the gentle Anacreon and the tempestuous Pindar.

His versification seems to have had very little of his care; and if what he thinks be true, that his numbers are unmusical only when they are ill-read, the art of reading them is at present lost; for they are commonly harsh to modern ears. He has indeed many noble lines, such as the feeble care of Waller never could produce. The bulk of his thoughts sometimes swelled his verse to unexpected and inevitable grandeur; but his excellence of this kind is merely fortuitous: he sinks willingly down to his general carelessness, and avoids with very little care either meanness or asperity.

His contractions are often rugged and harsh:

> One flings a mountain, and its rivers too
> Torn up with 't.

His rhymes are very often made by pronouns, or particles, or the like unimportant words, which

disappoint the ear, and destroy the energy of the line.

His combination of different measures is sometimes dissonant and unpleasing; he joins verses together, of which the former does not slide easily into the latter.

The words *do* and *did*, which so much degrade in present estimation the line that admits them, were in the time of Cowley little censured or avoided; how often he used them, and with how bad an effect, at least to our ears, will appear by a passage, in which every reader will lament to see just and noble thoughts defrauded of their praise by inelegance of language:

Where honour or where conscience *does* not bind,
No other law shall shackle me;
Slave to myself I ne'er will be;
Nor shall my future actions be confin'd
By my own present mind.
Who by resolves and vows engag'd *does* stand
For days, that yet belong to fate,
Does like an unthrift mortgage his estate,
Before it falls into his hand;
The bondman of the cloister so,
All that he *does* receive *does* always owe.
And still as Time comes in, it goes away,
Not to enjoy, but debts to pay!
Unhappy slave, and pupil to a bell!
Which his hour's work as well as hours *does* tell:
Unhappy till the last, the kind realeasing knell.

His heroic lines are often formed of monosyllables; but yet they are sometimes sweet and sonorous,

He says of the Messiah,

Round the whole earth his dreaded name shall sound,
And reach to worlds that must not yet be found.

In another place of David,

Yet bid him go securely when he sends;
'Tis Saul that is his foe, and we his friends.
The man who has his God no aid can lack,
And we who bid him go, will bring him back.

Yet amidst this negligence he sometimes attempted an improved and scientifick versification; of which it will be best to give his own account subjoined to this line:

Nor can the glory contain itself in th' endless space.

"I am sorry that it is necessary to admonish "the most part of readers, that it is not by negli- "gence that this verse is so loose, long, and, as it "were, vast; it is to paint in the number the na- "ture of the thing which it describes, which I "would have observed in divers other places of "this poem, that else will pass for very careless "verses: as before,

And over-runs the neighb'ring fields with violent course.

"In the second book;

Down a precipice, deep, down he casts them all.——

"And,

And fell a-down his shoulders with loose care.

"In the third,

Brass was his helmet, his boots brass, and o'er
His breast a thick plate of strong brass he wore

" In the fourth,

Like some fair pine o'er-looking all th' ignobler wood.

" And,

Some from the rocks cast themselves down headlong.

" And many more: but it is enough to instance " in a few. The thing is, that the disposition of " words and numbers should be such, as that, out " of the order and sound of them, the things " themselves may be represented. This the Greeks " were not so accurate as to bind themselves to; " neither have our English poets observed it, for " aught I can find. The Latins *(qui Musas col-* " *unt severiors)* sometimes did it; and their prince, " Virgil, always: in whom the examples are in- " numerable, and taken notice of by all judici- " ous men, so that it is superfluous to collect them."

I know not wether he has, in many of these instances, attained the representation or resemblance that he purposes. Verse can imitate only sound and motion. A *boundless* verse, a *headlong* verse, and a verse of *brass* or of *strong brass*, seem to comprise very incongruous and unsociable ideas. What there is peculiar in the sound of the line expressing *loose care*, I cannot discover; nor why the *pine* is *taller* in an Alexandrine than in ten syllables.

But, not to defraud him of his due praise, he has given one example of representative versification, which perhaps no other English line can equal:

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise:
He, who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay
Till the whole stream that stopp'd him shall be gone,
Which runs, and, as it runs, for ever shall run on.

Cowley was, I believe, the first poet that mingled Alexandrines at pleasure with the common heroick of ten syllables; and from him Dryden borrowed the practice, whether ornamental or licentious. He considered the verse of twelve syllables as elevated and majestick, and has therefore deviated into that measure when he supposes the voice heard of the Supreme Being.

The author of the Davideis is commended by Dryden for having written it in couplets, because he discovered that any staff was too lyrical for an heroick poem; but this seems to have been known before by May and Sandys, the translators of the Pharsalia and the Metamorphoses.

In the Davideis are some hemistichs, or verses left imperfect by the author, in imitation of Virgil, whom he supposes not to have intended to complete them; that this opinion is erroneous, may be probably concluded, because this truncation is imitated by no subsequent Roman poet; because Virgil himself filled up one broken line in the heat of recitation; because in one the sense is now unfinished; and because all that can be done by a broken verse, a line intersected by a *cæsura*, and a full stop, will equally effect

Of triplets in his Davideis he makes no use, and perhaps did not at first think them allowable; but he appears afterwards to have changed his mind,

for in the verses on the government of Cromwell he inserts them liberally with great happiness.

After so much criticism on his Poems, the Essays which accompany them must not be forgotten. What is said by Sprat of his conversation, that no man could draw from it any suspicion of his excellence in poetry, may be applied to these compositions. No author ever kept his verse and his prose at a greater distance from each other. His thoughts are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equability, which has never yet obtained its due commendation. Nothing is far-sought, or hard-laboured; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness.

It has been observed by Felton, in his Essay on the Classicks, that Cowley was beloved by every Muse that he courted; and that he has rivalled the Ancients in every kind of poetry but tragedy.

It may be affirmed, without any encomiastick fervour, that he brought to his poetick labours a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gaiety of the less; that he was equally qualified for spritely sallies, and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and, instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that, if he left versification yet improveable, he left likewise from time to time such specimens of excellence as enabled succeeding poets to improve it.

DENHAM.

OF Sir JOHN DENHAM very little is known but what is related of him by Wood, or by himself.

He was born at Dublin in 1615: the only son of Sir John Denham, of Little Horsely in Essex, then chief baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and of Eleanor, daughter of Sir Garret More, baron of Mellefont.

Two years afterwards, his father, being made one of the barons of the Exchequer in England, brought him away from his native country, and educated him in London.

In 1631 he was sent to Oxford, where he was considered "as a dreaming young man, given more "to dice and cards than study:" and therefore gave no prognosticks of his future eminence; nor was suspected to conceal, under sluggishness and levity, a genius born to improve the literature of his country.

When he was three years afterwards removed to Lincoln's Inn, he prosecuted the common law with sufficient appearance of application; yet did not

lose his propensity to cards and dice; but was very often plundered by gamesters.

Being severely reproved for this folly, he professed, and perhaps believed, himself reclaimed; and, to testify the sincerity of his repentance, wrote and published "An Essay upon Gaming."

He seems to have divided his studies between law and poetry; for, in 1636, he translated the second book of the Æneid.

Two years after, his father died; and then, notwithstanding his resolutions and professions, he returned again to the vice of gaming, and lost several thousand pounds that had been left him.

In 1642, he published "The Sophy." This seems to have given him his first hold of the publick attention; for Waller remarked, "that he "broke out like the Irish rebellion, threescore "thousand strong, when nobody was aware, or "in the least suspected it;" an observation which could have had no propriety, had his poetical abilities been known before.

He was after that pricked for sheriff of Surrey, and made governor of Farnham Castle for the king; but he soon resigned that charge, and retreated to Oxford, where, in 1643, he published "Cooper's Hill."

This poem had such reputation as to excite the common artifice by which envy degrades excellence.

A report was spread, that the performance was not his own, but that he had bought it of a vicar for forty pounds. The same attempt was made to rob Addison of Cato, and Pope of his Essay on Criticism.

In 1647, the distresses of the royal family required him to engage in more dangerous employments. He was entrusted by the queen with a message to the king; and, by whatever means, so far softened the ferocity of Hugh Peters, that by his intercession admission was procured. Of the king's condescension he has given an account in the dedication of his works.

He was afterwards employed in carrying on the king's correspondence; and, as he says, discharged this office with great safety to the royalists: and, being accidentally discovered by the adverse party's knowledge of Mr Cowley's hand, he escaped happily both for himself and his friends.

He was yet engaged in a greater undertaking. In April, 1648, he conveyed James the Duke of York from London into France, and delivered him there to the queen and prince of Wales. This year he published his translation of "Cato Major."

He now resided in France, as one of the followers of the exiled king; and, to divert the melancholy of their condition, was sometimes enjoined by his master to write occasional verses; one of which amusements was probably his ode or song upon the Embassy to Poland, by which he and lord Crofts procured a contribution of ten thousand pounds from the Scotch, that wandered over that kingdom. Poland was at that time very much frequented by itinerant traders, who, in a country of very little commerce and of great extent, where every man resided on his own estate, contributed very much to the accommodation of

life, by bringing to every man's house those little necessaries which it was very inconvenient to want, and very troublesome to fetch. I have formerly read, without much reflection, of the multitude of Scotchmen that travelled with their wares in Poland; and that their numbers were not small, the success of this negociation gives sufficient evidence.

About this time, what estate the war and the gamesters had left him was sold, by order of the parliament; and when, in 1652, he returned to England, he was entertained by the Earl of Pembroke.

Of the next years of his life there is no account. At the Restoration he obtained that which many missed, the reward of his loyalty; being made surveyor of the king's buildings, and dignified with the Order of the Bath. He seems now to have learned some attention to money; for Wood says, that he got by this place seven thousand pounds.

After the Restoration, he wrote the poem on Prudence and Justice, and perhaps some of his other pieces: and as he appears, whenever any serious question comes before him, to have been a man of piety, he consecrated his poetical powers to religion, and made a metrical version of the Psalms of David. In this attempt he has failed; but in sacred poetry who has succeeded?

It might be hoped that the favour of his master and esteem of the publick would now make him happy. But human felicity is short and uncertain; a second marriage brought upon him so much disquiet, as for a time disordered his understanding:

and Butler lampooned him for his lunacy. I know not whether the malignant lines were then made publick, nor what provocation incited Butler to do that which no provocation can excuse.

His frenzy lasted not long; and he seems to have regained his full force of mind; for he wrote afterwards his excellent poem upon the death of Cowley, whom he was not long to survive; for on the 19th of March, 1668, he was buried by his side.

DENHAM is deservedly considered as one of the fathers of English poetry. "Denham and Waller," says Prior, "improved our versification, and Dry-"den perfected it." He has given specimens of various composition, descriptive, ludicrous, didactick, and sublime.

He appears to have had, in common with almost all mankind, the ambition of being upon proper occasions *a merry fellow*, and in common with most of them to have been by nature, or by early habits, debarred from it. Nothing is less exhilarating than the ludicrousness of Denham; he does not fail for want of efforts; he is familiar, he is gross; but he is never merry, unless the "Speech against "Peace in the close committee" be excepted. For grave burlesque, however, his imitation of Davenant shews him to be well qualified.

Of his more elevated occasional poems there is perhaps none that does not deserve commendation. In the verses to Fletcher, we have an image that has since been often adopted:

"But whither am I stray'd? I need not raise
"Trophies to thee from other men's dispraise;

" Nor is thy fame on lesser ruins built,
" Nor need thy juster title the foul guilt
" Of eastern kings, who, to secure their reign,
" Must have their brothers, sons, and kindred, slain."

After Denham, Orrery, in one of his prologues,

" Poets are Sultans, if they had their will;
" For every author would his brother kill."

And Pope,

" Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
" Bear like the Turk no brother near the throne."

But this is not the best of his little pieces: it is excelled by his poem to Fanshaw, and his elegy on Cowley.

His praise of Fanshaw's version of *Guarini* contains a very spritely and judicious character of a good translator:

" That servile path thou nobly dost decline,
" Of tracing word by word, and line by line.
" Those are the labour'd birth of slavish brains,
" Not the effect of poetry, but pains;
" Cheap vulgar arts, whose narrowness affords
" No flight for thoughts, but poorly stick at words.
" A new and nobler way thou dost pursue,
" To make translations and translators too.
" They but preserve the ashes; thou the flame,
" True to his sense, but truer to his fame.

The excellence of these lines is greater, as the truth which they contain was not at that time generally known.

His poem on the death of Cowley was his last, and, among his shorter works, his best perform-

ance: the numbers are musical, and the thoughts are just.

"COOPER'S HILL" is the work that confers upon him the rank and dignity of an original author. He seems to have been, at least among us, the author of a species of composition that may be denominated *local poetry*, of which the fundamental subject is some particular landscape, to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection or incidental meditation.

To trace a new scheme of poetry has in itself a very high claim to praise, and its praise is yet more when it is apparently copied by Garth and Pope; after whose names little will be gained by an enumeration of smaller poets, that have left scarcely a corner of the island not dignified either by rhyme, or blank verse.

"COOPER'S HILL," if it be maliciously inspected, will not be found without its faults. The digressions are too long, the morality too frequent, and the sentiments sometimes such as will not bear a rigorous inquiry.

The four verses, which, since Dryden has commended them, almost every writer for a century past has imitated, are generally known:

"O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
"My great example, as it is my theme!
"Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull;
"Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full."

The lines are in themselves not perfect; for most of the words, thus artfully opposed, are to be un-

derstood simply on one side of the comparison, and metaphorically on the other; and if there be any language which does not express intellectual operations by material images, into that language they cannot be translated. But so much meaning is comprized in so few words; the particulars of resemblance are so perspicaciously collected, and every mode of excellence separated from its ajacent fault by so nice a line of limitation; the different parts of the sentence are so accurately adjusted; and the flow of the last couplet is so smooth and sweet; that the passage, however celebrated, has not been praised above its merit. It has beauty peculiar to itself, and must be numbered among those felicities which cannot be produced at will by wit and labour, but must arise unexpectedly in some hour propitious to poetry.

He appears to have been one of the first that understood the necessity of emancipating translation from the drudgery of counting lines and interpreting single words. How much this servile practice obscured the clearest and deformed the most beautiful parts of the ancient authors, may be discovered by a perusal of our earlier versions; some of them are the works of men well qualified, not only by critical knowledge, but by poetical genius, who yet, by a mistaken ambition of exactness, degraded at once their originals and themselves.

Denham saw the better way, but has not pursued it with great success. His versions of Virgil are not pleasing; but they taught Dryden to please better. His poetical imitation of Tully on

"Old Age" has neither the clearness of prose, nor the spriteliness of poetry.

The "strength of Denham," which Pope so emphatically mentions, is to be found in many lines and couplets, which convey much meaning in few words, and exhibit the sentiment with more weight than bulk.

On the Thames.

"Though with those streams he no resemblance hold,
"Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold;
"His genuine and less guilty wealth t' explore,
"Search not his bottom, but survey his shore."

On Stafford.

"His wisdom such, at once it did appear
"Three kingdoms' wonder, and three kingdoms' fear
"While single he stood forth, and seem'd, although
"Each had an army, as an equal foe,
"Such was his force of eloquence, to make
"The hearers more concern'd than he that spake:
"Each seem'd to act that part he came to see,
"And none was more a looker-on than he;
"So did he move our passions, some were known
"To wish, for the defence, the crime their own.
"Now private pity strove with public hate,
"Reason with rage, and eloquence with fate."

On Cowley.

"To him no author was unknown,
"Yet what he wrote was all his own;
"Horace's wit, and Virgil's state,
"He did not steal but emulate!
"And, when he would like them appear,
"Their garb, but not their clothes, did wear."

As one of Denham's principal claims to the regard of posterity arises from his improvement of our numbers, his versification ought to be considered. It will afford that pleasure which arises from the observation of a man of judgment, naturally right, forsaking bad copies by degrees, and advancing towards a better practice, as he gains more confidence in himself.

In his translation of Virgil, written when he was about twenty-one years old, may be still found the old manner of continuing the sense ungracefully from verse to verse :

" Then all those
" Who in the dark our fury did escape,
" Returning, know our borrow'd arms, and shape,
" And differing dialect; then their numbers swell
" And grow upon us; first Chorœbeus fell
" Before Minerva's altar; next did bleed
" Just Ripheus, whom no Trojan did exceed
" In virtue, yet the gods his fate decreed.
" Then Hypanis and Dymas, wounded by
" Their friends; nor thee, Pantheus, thy piety,
" Nor consecrated mitre, from the same
" Ill fate could save; my country's funeral flame
" And Troy's cold ashes I attest and call
" To witness for myself, that in their fall
" No foes, no death, nor danger I declin'd,
" Did and deserv'd no less, my fate to find."

From this kind of concatenated metre he afterwards refrained, and taught his followers the art of conlcuding their sense in couplets ; which has perhaps been with rather too much constancy pursued.

This passage exhibits one of those triplets which

are not unfrequent in this first essay, but which it is to be supposed his maturer judgment disapproved, since in his latter work he has totally forborn them.

His rhymes are such as seem found without difficulty, by following the sense; and are for the most part as exact at least as those of other poets, though now and then the reader is shifted off with what he can get:

" O how *transform'd!*
" How much unlike that Hector, who *return'd*
" Clad in Achilles' spoils!"

And again:

" From thence a thousand lesser poets *sprung*
" Like petty princes from the fall of *Rome.*"

Sometimes the weight of rhyme is laid upon a word too feeble to sustain it:

" Troy confounded falls
" From all her glories: if it might have stood
" By any power, by this right hand it *shou'd.*
" — And though my outward state misfortune *hath*
" Deprest thus low, it cannot reach my faith."
" — Thus, by his fraud and our own faith o'ercome,
" A feigned tear destroys us, against *whom*
" Tydides nor Achilles could prevail,
" Nor ten years conflict, nor a thousand sail."

He is not very careful to vary the ends of his verses; in one passage the word *die* rhymes three couplets in six.

Most of these petty faults are in his first productions, where he was less skilful, or at least

less dextrous in the use of words; and though they had been more frequent, they could only have lessened the grace, not the strength of his composition. He is one of the writers that improved our taste, and advanced our language, and whom we ought therefore to read with gratitude, though, having done much, he left much to do.

MILTON.

THE life of Milton has been already written in so many forms, and with such minute inquiry, that I might perhaps more properly have contented myself with the addition of a few notes on Mr Fenton's elegant Abridgement, but that a new narrative was thought necessary to the uniformity of this edition.

JOHN MILTON was by birth a gentleman, descended from the proprietors of Milton, near Thame, in Oxfordshire, one of whom forfeited his estate in the times of York and Lancaster. Which side he took I know not; his descendant inherited no veneration for the White Rose.

His grandfather John was keeper of the forest of Shotover, a zealous papist, who disinherited his son, because he had forsaken the religion of his ancestors.

His father, John, who was the son disinherited, had recourse for his support to the profession of a scrivener. He was a man eminent for his skill in musick, many of his compositions being still to be found; and his reputation in his profession was

such, that he grew rich, and retired to an estate. He had probably more than common literature, as his son addresses him in one of his most elaborate Latin poems. He married a gentlewoman of the name of Caston, a Welsh family, by whom he had two sons, John, the poet, and Christopher, who studied the law, and adhered, as the law taught him, to the King's party, for which he was a while persecuted, but having, by his brother's interest, obtained permission to live in quiet, he supported himself so honourably by chamber-practice, that, soon after the accession of King James, he was knighted and made a judge; but, his constitution being too weak for business, he retired before any disreputable compliances became necessary.

He had likewise a daughter Anne, whom he married with a considerable fortune to Edward Philips, who came from Shrewsbury, and rose in the Crown-office to be secondary: by him she had two sons, John and Edward, who were educated by the poet, and from whom is derived the only authentic account of his domestic manners.

John, the poet, was born in his father's house, at the Spread Eagle in Bread-street, Dec. 9, 1608, between six and seven in the morning. His father appears to have been very solicitous about his education; for he was instructed at first by private tuition under the care of Thomas Young, who was afterwards chaplain to the English merchants at Hamburgh, and of whom we have reason to think well, since his scholar considered him as worthy of an epistolary elegy.

He was then sent to St Paul's School, under the care of Mr Gill; and removed, in the begin-

ning of his sixteenth year, to Christ's College in Cambridge, where he entered a sizer, Feb. 12, 1624.

He was at this time eminently skilled in the Latin tongue; and he himself, by annexing the dates to his first compositions, a boast of which the learned Politian had given him an example, seems to commend the earliness of his own proficiency to the notice of posterity. But the products of his vernal fertility have been surpassed by many, and particularly by his contemporary Cowley. Of the powers of the mind it is difficult to form an estimate: many have excelled Milton in their first essays, who never rose to works like *Paradise Lost*.

At fifteen, a date which he uses till he is sixteen, he translated or versified two Psalms, 114 and 136, which he thought worthy of the publick eye; but they raise no great expectations: they would in any numerous school have obtained praise, but not excited wonder.

Many of his elegies appear to have been written in his eighteenth year, by which it appears that he had then read the Roman authors with very nice discernment. I once heard Mr Hampton, the translator of Polybius, remark, what I think is true, that Milton was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses, with classick elegance. If any exceptions can be made, they are very few: Haddon and Ascham, the pride of Elizabeth's reign, however they have succeeded in prose, no sooner attempt verse than they provoke derision. If we produced any thing

worthy of notice before the elegies of Milton, it was perhaps *Alabaster's Roxana.*

Of the exercises, which the rules of the University required, some were published by him in his maturer years. They had been undoubtedly applauded; for they were such as few can perform; yet there is reason to suspect that he was regarded in his college with no great fondness. That he obtained no fellowship is certain; but the unkindness with which he was treated was not merely negative. I am ashamed to relate what I fear is true, that Milton was one of the last students in either university that suffered the publick indignity of corporal correction.

It was, in the violence of controversial hostility, objected to him, that he was expelled: this he steadily denies, and it was apparently not true; but it seems plain, from his own verses to *Diodati*, that he had incurred *rustication*, a temporary dismission into the country, with perhaps the loss of a term.

Me tenet urbs refluâ quam Thamesis alluit undâ,
Meque nec invitum patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
Nec dudum *vetiti* me *laris* angit amor.—
Nec duri libet usque minas perferre magistri,
Cæteraque ingenio non subeunda meo
Si sit hoc *exilium* patrios adiisse penates,
Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel *profugi* nomen sortemve recuso,
Lætus et *exilii* conditione fruor.

I cannot find any meaning but this, which even kindness and reverence can give the term, *vetiti laris*, "a habitation from which he is excluded;"

or how *exile* can be otherwise interpreted. He declares yet more, that he is weary of enduring *the threats of a rigorous master, and something else, which a temper like his cannot undergo.* What was more than threat was probably punishment. This poem, which mentions his *exile*, proves likewise that it was not perpetual; for it concludes with a resolution of returning some time to Cambridge. And it may be conjectured, from the willingness with which he has perpetuated the memory of his exile, that its cause was such as gave him no shame.

He took both the usual degrees; that of Bachelor in 1628, and that of Master in 1632; but he left the university with no kindness for its institution, alienated either by the injudicious severity of his governors, or his own captious perverseness. The cause cannot now be known, but the effect appears in his writings. His scheme of education, inscribed to *Hartlib*, supersedes all academical instruction, being intended to comprise the whole time which men usually spend in literature, from their entrance upon grammar, *till they proceed, as it is called, Masters of Arts.* And in his Discourse *on the likeliest Way to Remove Hirelings out of the Church*, he ingeniously proposes, that *the profits of the lands forfeited by the act for superstitious uses should be applied to such academies, all over the land, where languages and arts may be taught together; so that youth may be at once brought up to a competency of learning and an honest trade, by which means such of them as had the gift, being enabled to support themselves (without tithes) by the latter, may, by the help of the former, become worthy preachers.*

One of his objections to academical education,

as it was then conducted, is, that men designed for orders in the Church were permitted to act plays, *writhing and unboning their clergy limbs to all the antick and dishonest gestures of Trincalos, buffoons, and bawds, prostituting the shame of that ministry which they had, or were near having, to the eyes of courtiers and court ladies, their grooms and mademoiselles.*

This is sufficiently peevish in a man, who, when he mentions his exile from the college, relates, with great luxuriance, the compensation which the pleasures of the theatre afford him. Plays were therefore only criminal when they were acted by academicks.

He went to the university with a design of entering into the Church, but in time altered his mind; for he declared, that whoever became a clergyman must "subscribe slave, and take an oath "withal, which, unless he took with a conscience "that could not retch, he must straight perjure "himself. He thought it better to prefer a "blameless silence before the office of speaking, "bought and begun with servitude and forswear-"ing."

These expressions are, I find, applied to the subscription of the Articles; but it seems more probable that they relate to canonical obedience. I know not any of the articles which seem to thwart his opinions: but the thoughts of obedience, whether canonical or civil, raised his indignation.

His unwillingness to engage in the ministry, perhaps not yet advanced to a settled resolution of declining it, appears in a letter to one of his friends,

who had reproved his suspended and dilatory life, which he seems to have imputed to an insatiable curiosity, and fantastic luxury of various knowledge. To this he writes a cool and plausible answer, in which he endeavours to persuade him, that the delay proceeds not from the delights of desultory study, but from the desire of obtaining more fitness for his task; and that he goes on, *not taking thought of being late, so it gives advantage to be more fit.*

When he left the university, he returned to his father, then residing at Horton in Buckinghamshire, with whom he lived five years, in which time he is said to have read all the Greek and Latin writers. With what limitations this universality is to be understood, who shall inform us?

It might be supposed, that he who read so much should have done nothing else; but Milton found time to write the *Masque of Comus*, which was presented at Ludlow, then the residence of the Lord President of Wales, in 1634; and had the honour of being acted by the Earl of Bridgewater's sons and daughter. The fiction is derived from Homer's *Circe*, but we never can refuse to any modern the liberty of borrowing from Homer:

> ——— a quo ceu fonte perenni
> Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis.

His next production was *Lycidas*, an elegy, written in 1637, on the death of Mr King, the son of Sir John King, secretary for Ireland in the time of Elizabeth, James, and Charles. King was much a favourite at Cambridge, and many of the wits joined to do honour to his memory. Mil-

ton's acquaintance with the Italian writers may be discovered by a mixture of longer and shorter verses, according to the rules of Tuscan poetry, and his malignity to the Church, by some lines which are interpreted as threatening its extermination.

He is supposed about this time to have written his *Arcades;* for, while he lived at Horton, he used sometimes to steal from his studies a few days, which he spent at Harefield, the house of the Countess Dowager of Derby, where the *Arcades* made part of a dramatic entertainment.

He began now to grow weary of the country, and had some purpose of taking chambers in the Inns of Court, when the death of his mother set him at liberty to travel, for which he obtained his father's consent, and Sir Henry Wotton's directions; with the celebrated precept of prudence, *i pensieri stretti, ed il viso sciolto;* "thoughts close, and looks loose."

In 1638 he left England, and went first to Paris; where, by the favour of Lord Scudamore, he had the opportunity of visiting Grotius, then residing at the French Court as ambassador from Christina of Sweden. From Paris he hasted into Italy, of which he had with particular diligence studied the language and literature; and though he seems to have intended a very quick perambulation of the country, staid two months at Florence; where he found his way into the academies, and produced his compositions with such applause as appears to have exalted him in his own opinion, and confirmed him in the hope, that, "by labour and intense study, which," says he, "I take to

" be my portion in this life, joined with a strong " propensity of nature;" he might "leave something " so written to after-times, as they should not " willingly let it die."

It appears, in all his writings, that he had the usual concomitant of great abilities, a lofty and steady confidence in himself, perhaps not without some contempt of others; for scarcely any man ever wrote so much, and praised so few. Of his praise he was very frugal; as he set its value high, and considered his mention of a name as a security against the waste of time, and a certain preservative from oblivion.

At Florence he could not indeed complain that his merit wanted distinction. Carlo Dati presented him with an encomiastic inscription, in the tumid lapidary style; and Francini wrote him an ode, of which the first stanza is only empty noise; the rest are perhaps too diffuse on common topics: but the last is natural and beautiful.

From Florence he went to Sienna, and from Sienna to Rome, where he was again received with kindness by the learned and the great. Holstenius, the keeper of the Vatican library, who had resided three years at Oxford, introduced him to Cardinal Barberini; and he, at a musical entertainment, waited for him at the door, and led him by the hand into the assembly. Here Selvaggi praised him in a distich, and Salsilli in a tetrastick, neither of them of much value. The Italians were gainers by this literary commerce; for the encomiums with which Milton repaid Salsilli, though not secure against a stern grammarian, turn the balance indisputably in Milton's favour.

Of these Italian testimonies, poor as they are, he was proud enough to publish them before his poems; though he says, he cannot be suspected but to have known that they were said *non tam de se, quam supra se.*

At Rome, as at Florence, he staid only two months; a time indeed sufficient, if he desired only to ramble with an explainer of its antiquities, or to view palaces and count pictures, but certainly too short for the contemplation of learning, policy, or manners.

From Rome he passed on to Naples, in company of a hermit, a companion from whom little could be expected; yet to him Milton owed his introduction to Manso marquis of Villa, who had been before the patron of Tasso. Manso was enough delighted with his accomplishments to honour him with a sorry distich, in which he commends him for every thing but his religion: and Milton, in return, addressed him in a Latin poem, which must have raised an high opinion of English elegance and literature.

His purpose was now to have visited Sicily and Greece; but, hearing of the differences between the king and parliament, he thought it proper to hasten home, rather than pass his life in foreign amusements, while his countrymen were contending for their rights. He therefore came back to Rome, though the merchants informed him of plots laid against him by the Jesuits, for the liberty of his conversations on religion. He had sense enough to judge that there was no danger, and therefore kept on his way, and acted as before, neither obtruding nor shunning controversy. He

had perhaps given some offence by visiting Galileo, then a prisoner in the Inquisition for philosophical heresy; and at Naples he was told by Manso, that, by his declarations on religious questions, he had excluded himself from some distinctions which he should otherwise have paid him. But such conduct, though it did not please, was yet sufficiently safe; and Milton staid two months more at Rome, and went on to Florence without molestation.

From Florence he visited Lucca. He afterwards went to Venice; and, having sent away a collection of musick and other books, travelled to Geneva, which he probably considered as the metropolis of orthodoxy.

Here he reposed as in a congenial element, and became acquainted with John Diodati and Frederick Spanheim, two learned professors of Divinity. From Geneva he passed through France; and came home, after an absence of a year and three months.

At his return he heard of the death of his friend Charles Diodati; a man whom it is reasonable to suppose of great merit, since he was thought by Milton worthy of a poem, intituled *Epitaphium Damonis*, written with the common but childish imitation of pastoral life.

He now hired a lodging at the house of one Russel, a taylor in St Bride's Church-yard, and undertook the education of John and Edward Philips, his sister's sons. Finding his rooms too little, he took a house and garden in Aldersgate-street, which was not then so much out of the world as it is now; and chose his dwelling at the upper end

of a passage, that he might avoid the noise of the street. Here he received more boys, to be boarded and instructed.

Let not our veneration for Milton forbid us to look with some degree of merriment on great promises and small performance, on the man who hastens home, because his countrymen are contending for their liberty, and, when he reaches the scene of action, vapours away his patriotism in a private boarding-school. This is the period of his life from which all his biographers seem inclined to shrink. They are unwilling that Milton should be degraded to a school-master; but, since it cannot be denied that he taught boys, one finds out that he taught for nothing, and another that his motive was only zeal for the propagation of learning and virtue; and all tell what they do not know to be true, only to excuse an act which no wise man will consider as in itself disgraceful. His father was alive; his allowance was not ample; and he supplied its deficiencies by an honest and useful employment.

It is told, that in the art of education he performed wonders; and a formidable list is given of the authors, Greek and Latin, that were read in Aldersgate-street by youth between ten and fifteen or sixteen years of age. Those who tell or receive these stories should consider, that nobody can be taught faster than he can learn. The speed of the horseman must be limited by the power of the horse. Every man, that has ever undertaken to instruct others, can tell what slow advances he has been able to make, and how much patience it requires to re-

cal vagrant inattention, to stimulate sulggish indifference, and to rectify absurd misapprehension.

The purpose of Milton, as it seems, was to teach something more solid than the common literature of Schools, by reading those authors that treat of physical subjects; such as the Georgick, and astronomical treatises of the ancients. This was a scheme of improvement which seems to have busied many literary projectors of that age. Cowley, who had more means than Milton of knowing what was wanting to the embellishments of life, formed the same plan of education in his imaginary College.

But the truth is, that the knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great or the frequent business of the human mind. Whether we provide for action or conversation, whether we wish to be useful or pleasing, the first requisite is the religious and moral knowledge of right and wrong; the next is an acquaintance with the history of mankind, and with those examples which may be said to embody truth, and prove by events the reasonablness of opinions. Prudence and Justice are virtues and excellencies of all times and of all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance. Our intercourse with intellectual nature is necessary; our speculations upon matter are voluntary, and at leisure. Physiological learning is of such rare emergence, that one may know another half his life, without being able to estimate his skill in hydrostaticks or astronomy; but his moral and prudential character immediately appears.

Those authors, therefore, are to be read at schools that supply most axioms of prudence, most principles of moral truth, and most materials for conversation; and these purposes are best served by poets, orators, and historians.

Let me not be censured for this digression as pedantick or paradoxical; for, if I have Milton against me, I have Socrates on my side. It was his labour to turn philosophy from the study of nature to speculations upon life; but the innovators whom I oppose are turning off attention from life to nature. They seem to think, that we are placed here to watch the growth of plants, or the motions of the stars. Socrates was rather of opinion, that what we had to learn was, how to do good, and avoid evil.

Ὅστι τοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακόντ' ἀγαθόντε τέτυκται.

Of institutions we may judge by their effects. From this wonder-working academy, I do not know that there ever proceeded any man very eminent for knowledge: its only genuine product, I believe, is a small History of Poetry, written in Latin by his nephew Philips, of which perhaps none of my readers has ever heard.

That in his school, as in every thing else which he undertook, he laboured with great diligence, there is no reason for doubting. One part of his method deserves general imitation. He was careful to instruct his scholars in religion. Every Sunday was spent upon theology; of which he dictated a short system, gathered from the writers that were then fashionable in the Dutch universities.

He set his pupils an example of hard study and spare diet; only now and then he allowed himself to pass a day of festivity and indulgence with some gay gentlemen of Gray's Inn.

He now began to engage in the controversies of the times, and lent his breath to blow the flames of contention. In 1641 he published a treatise of *Reformation*, in two books, against the Established Church; being willing to help the Puritans, who were, he says, *inferior to the Prelates in learning.*

Hall, bishop of Norwich, had published an *Humble Remonstrance*, in defence of Episcopacy; to which, in 1641, five ministers, of whose names the first letters made the celebrated word *Smectymnuus*, gave their Answer. Of this Answer a Confutation was attempted by the learned Usher; and to the Confutation Milton published a Reply, intituled, *Of Prelatical Episcopacy, and whether it may be deduced from the Apostolical Times, by virtue of those Testimonies which are alledged to that Purpose in some late Treatises, one whereof goes under the Name of James Lord Bishop of Armagh.*

I have transcribed this title to shew, by his contemptuous mention of Usher, that he had now adopted the puritannical savageness of manners. His next work was, *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy, by Mr John Milton*, 1642. In this book he discovers, not with ostentatious exultation, but with calm confidence, his high opinion of his own powers; and promises to undertake something, he yet knows not what, that may be of use and honour to his country. "This," says he, "is not to be obtained but by devout "prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich

" with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out " his Seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, " to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. " To this must be added, industrious and select " reading, steady observation, and insight into all " seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which " in some measure be compast, I refuse not to sus- " tain this expectation." From a promise like this, at once fervid, pious, and rational, might be expected the *Paradise Lost*.

He published the same year two more pamphlets, upon the same question. To one of his antagonists, who affirms that he was *vomited out of the University*, he answers, in general terms: " The " Fellows of the College wherein I spent some " years, at my parting, after I had taken two de- " grees, as the manner is, signified many times " how much better it would content them that I " should stay.—As for the common approbation " or dislike of that place, as now it is, that I " should esteem or disesteem myself the more for " that, too simple is the answerer, if he think to " obtain with me. Of small practice were the " physician who could not judge, by what she and " her sister have of long time vomited, that the " worser stuff she strongly keeps in her stomach, " but the better she is ever kecking at, and is " queasy; she vomits now out of sickness; but " before it will be well with her, she must vomit " by strong physick. The university, in the time " of her better health, and my younger judgment, " I never greatly admired, but now much less."

This is surely the language of a man who thinks that he has been injured. He proceeds to describe

the course of his conduct, and the train of his thoughts; and, because he has been suspected of incontinence, gives an account of his own purity: "That if I be justly chargedy" says he, "with "this crime, it may come upon me with tenfold "shame."

The style of his piece is rough, and such perhaps was that of his antagonist. This roughness he justifies, by great examples, in a long digression. Sometimes he tries to be humourous: "Lest I should take him for some chaplain in "hand, some squire of the body to his prelate, one "who serves not at the altar only, but at the Court-"cupboard, he will bestow on us a pretty model of "himself; and sets me out half a dozen ptisical "mottoes, wherever he had them, hopping short "in the measure of convulsion fits; in which la-"bour the agony of his wit having escaped nar-"rowly, instead of well-sized periods, he greets us "with a quantity of thumb-ring poesies.—And "thus ends this section, or rather dissection of "himself."—Such is the controversial merriment of Milton; his gloomy seriousness is yet more offensive. Such is his malignity, *that hell grows darker at his frown.*

His father, after Reading was taken by Essex, came to reside in his house; and his school increased. At Whitsuntide, in his thirty-fifth year, he married Mary, the daughter of Mr Powel, a justice of the peace in Oxfordshire. He brought her to town with him, and expected all the advantages of a conjugal life. The lady, however, seems not much to have delighted in the pleasures of spare diet and hard study; for, as Philips relates,

" having for a month led a philosophick life, after " having been used at home to a great house, and " much company and joviality, her friends, possibly " by her own desire, made earnest suit to have her " company the remaining part of the summer; " which was granted, upon a promise of her re- " turn at Michaelmas."

Milton was too busy to much miss his wife; he pursued his studies; and now and then visited the Lady Margaret Leigh, whom he has mentioned in one of his sonnets. At last Michaelmas arrived; but the lady had no inclination to return to the sullen gloom of her husband's habitation, and therefore very willingly forgot her promise. He sent her a letter, but had no answer: he sent more with the same success. It could be alledged that letters miscarry; he therefore dispatched a messenger, being by this time too angry to go himself. His messenger was sent back with some contempt. The family of the lady were Cavaliers.

In a man whose opinion of his own merit was like Milton's, less provocation than this might have raised violent resentment. Milton soon determined to repudiate her for disobedience; and, being one of those who could easily find arguments to justify nclination, published (in 1644) *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce;* which was followed by *The Judgment of Martin Bucer, concerning Divorce;* and the next year, his *Tetrachordon, Expositions upon the four chief Places of Scripture which treat of Marriage.*

This innovation was opposed, as might be expected, by the clergy, who, then holding their famous assembly at Westminster, procured that the

author should be called before the Lords; "but "that house," says Wood, "whether approving "the doctrine, or not favouring his accusers, did "soon dismiss him."

There seems not to have been much written against him, nor any thing by any writer of eminence. The antagonist that appeared is styled by him, *A Serving-Man turned Solicitor.* Howel, in his Letters, mentions the new doctrine with contempt; and it was, I suppose, thought more worthy of derision than of confutation. He complains of this neglect in two sonnets, of which the first is contemptible, and the second not excellent.

From this time it is observed, that he became an enemy to the Presbyterians, whom he had favoured before. He that changes his party by his humour is not more virtuous than he that changes it by his interest; he loves himself rather than truth.

His wife and her relations now found that Milton was not an unresisting sufferer of injuries; and perceiving that he had begun to put his doctrine in practice, by courting a young woman of great accomplishments, the daughter of one Doctor Davis, who was however not ready to comply, they resolved to endeavour a re-union. He went sometimes to the house of one Blackborough, his relation, in the lane of St Martin's-le-Grand, and at one of his usual visits was surprized to see his wife come from another room, and implore forgiveness on her knees. He resisted her entreaties for a while: "but partly," says Philips, "his own "generous nature, more inclinable to reconcilia-"tion than to perseverance in anger or revenge, "and partly the strong intercession of friends on

" both sides, soon brought him to an act of obli-
" vion and a firm league of peace." It were injurious to omit, that Milton afterwards received her father and her brothers in his own house, when they were distressed, with other Royalists.

He published about the same time his *Ariopagitica, a Speech of* Mr John Milton *for the Liberty of unlicensed Printing.* The danger of such unbounded liberty, and the danger of bounding it, have produced a problem in the science of government, which human understanding seems hitherto unable to solve. If nothing may be published but what civil authority shall have previously approved, power must always be the standard of truth: if every dreamer of innovations may propagate his projects, there can be no settlement; if every murmurer at government may diffuse discontent, there can be no peace; and if every sceptic in theology may teach his follies, there can be no religion. The remedy against these evils is to punish the authors; for it is yet allowed that every society may punish, though not prevent, the publication of opinions which that society shall think pernicious; but this punishment, though it may crush the author, promotes the book; and it seems not more reasonable to leave the right of printing unrestrained because writers may be afterwards censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because by our laws we can hang a thief.

But whatever were his engagements, civil or domestick, poetry was never long out of his thoughts.

About this time (1645) a collection of his Latin and English poems appeared, in which the

Allegro and *Penseroso*, with some others, were first published.

He had taken a larger house in Barbican for the reception of scholars; but the numerous relations of his wife, to whom he generously granted refuge for a while, occupied his rooms. In time, however, they went away; "and the house again," says Philips, "now looked like a house of the "Muses only, though the accession of scholars "was not great. Possibly his having proceeded "so far in the education of youth may have been "the occasion of his adversaries calling him peda-"gogue and schoolmaster; whereas it is well "known he never set up for a publick school, to "teach all the young fry of a parish; but only "was willing to impart his learning and knowledge "to his relations, and the sons of gentlemen who "were his intimate friends, and that neither his "writings nor his way of teaching ever savoured "in the least of pedantry."

Thus laboriously does his nephew extenuate what cannot be denied, and what might be confessed without disgrace. Milton was not a man who could become mean by a mean employment. This, however, his warmest friends seem not to have found; they therefore shift and palliate. He did not sell literature to all comers at an open shop; he was a chamber-milliner, and measured his commodities only to his friends.

Philips, evidently impatient of viewing him in this state of degradation, tells us that it was not long continued; and, to raise his character again, has a mind to invest him with military splendour: "He "is much mistaken," he says, "if there was not

" about this time a design of making him an adju-
" tant-general in Sir William Waller's army. But
" the new-modelling of the army proved an ob-
" struction to the design." An event cannot be set at a much greater distance than by having been only *designed, about some time*, if a man *be not much mistaken*. Milton shall be a pedagogue no longer; for, if Philips be not much mistaken, somebody at some time designed him for a soldier.

About the time that the army was new-modelled (1645), he removed to a smaller house in Holborn, which opened backward into Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. He is not known to have published any thing afterwards till the King's death, when, finding his murderers condemned by the Presbyterians, he wrote a treatise to justify it, and *to compose the minds of the people*.

He made some *Remarks on the Articles of Peace between Ormond and the Irish Rebels*. While he contented himself to write, he perhaps did only what his conscience dictated; and if he did not very vigilantly watch the influence of his own passions, and the gradual prevalence of opinions, first willingly admitted, and then habitually indulged; if objections, by being overlooked, were forgotten, and desire superinduced conviction; he yet shared only the common weakness of mankind, and might be no less sincere than his opponents. But as faction seldom leaves a man honest, however it might find him, Milton is suspected of having interpolated the book called *Icon Basilike*, which the Council of State, to whom he was now made Latin secretary, employed him to censure, by inserting a prayer taken from *Sidney's Arcadia*, and

imputing it to the King; whom he charges, in his *Iconoclastes*, with the use of this prayer, as with a heavy crime, in the indecent language with which prosperity had emboldened the advocates for rebellion to insult all that is venerable or great: "Who "would have imagined so little fear in him of the "true all-seeing Deity—as, immediately before his "death, to pop into the hands of the grave bishop "that attended him, as a special relique of his "saintly exercises, a prayer stolen word for word "from the mouth of a heathen woman praying to "a heathen god?"

The papers which the King gave to Dr Juxon on the scaffold the regicides took away, so that they were at least the publishers of this prayer; and Dr Birch, who had examined the question with great care, was inclined to think them the forgers. The use of it by adaptation was innocent; and they who could so noisily censure it, with a little extension of their malice, could contrive what they wanted to accuse.

King Charles the Second, being now sheltered in Holland, employed Salmasius, professor of polite learning at Leyden, to write a defence of his father and of monarchy; and, to excite his industry, gave him, as was reported, a hundred Jacobuses. Salmasius was a man of skill in languages, knowledge of antiquity, and sagacity of emendatory criticism, almost exceeding all hope of human attainment; and having, by excessive praises, been confirmed in great confidence of himself, though he probably had not much considered the principles of society or the rights of government, undertook the employment without distrust of his own quali-

fications; and, as his expedition in writing was wonderful, in 1649 published *Defensio Regis*.

To this Milton was required to write a sufficient answer; which he performed (1651) in such a manner, that Hobbes declared himself unable to decide whose language was best, or whose arguments were worst. In my opinion, Milton's periods are smoother, neater, and more pointed; but he delights himself with teazing his adversary as much as with confuting him. He makes a foolish allusion of Salmasius, whose doctrine he considers as servile and unmanly, to the stream of *Salmasius*, which, whoever entered, left half his virility behind him. Salmasius was a Frenchman, and was unhappily married to a scold. *Tu es Gallus*, says Milton, *et, ut aiunt, nimium gallinaceus*. But his supreme pleasure is to tax his adversary, so renowned for criticism, with vitious Latin. He opens his book with telling that he has used *persona*, which, according to Milton, signifies only a *mask*, in a sense not known to the Romans, by applying it as we apply *person*. But as Nemesis is always on the watch, it is memorable that he has enforced the charge of a solecism by an expression in itself grossly solecistical, when for one of those supposed blunders, he says, as Ker, and I think some one before him, has remarked, *propino te grammatistis tuis* vapulandum. From *vapulo*, which has a passive sense, *vapulandus* can never be derived. No man forgets his original trade: the rights of nations, and of kings, sink into questions of grammar, if grammarians discuss them.

Milton, when he undertook this answer, was weak of body and dim of sight; but his will was

forward, and what was wanting of health was supplied by zeal. He was rewarded with a thousand pounds, and his book was much read; for paradox, recommended by spirit and elegance, easily gains attention; and he, who told every man that he was equal to his King, could hardly want an audience.

That the performance of Salmasius was not dispersed with equal rapidity, or read with equal eagerness, is very credible. He taught only the stale doctrine of authority, and the unpleasing duty of submission; and he had been so long not only the monarch but the tyrant of literature, that almost all mankind were delighted to find him defied and insulted by a new name, not yet considered as any one's rival. If Christina, as it is said, commended the *Defence of the People*, her purpose must be to torment Salmasius, who was then at court; for neither her civil station, nor her natural character, could dispose her to favour the doctrine, who was by birth a queen, and by temper despotick.

That Salamasius was, from the appearance of Milton's book, treated with neglect, there is not much proof; but to a man, so long accustomed to admiration, a little praise of his antagonist would be sufficiently offensive, and might incline him to leave Sweden, from which however he was dismissed, not with any mark of contempt, but with a train of attendance scarcely less than regal.

He prepared a reply, which, left as it was imperfect, was published by his son in the year of the Restoration. In the beginning, being probably most in pain for his Latinity, he endeavours to defend his use of the word *persona*; but, if I re-

member right, he misses a better authority than any that he has found, that of Juvenal in his fourth satire:

> — Quid agas, cum dira & fœdior omni
> Crimine *Persona* est?

As Salmasius reproached Milton with losing his eyes in the quarrel, Milton delighted himself with the belief that he had shortened Salmasius' life, and both perhaps with more malignity than reason. Salmasius died at the Spa, Sept. 3, 1653; and, as controvertists are commonly said to be killed by their last dispute, Milton was flattered with the credit of destroying him.

Cromwell had now dismissed the parliment by the authority of which he had destroyed monarchy, and commenced monarch himself, under the title of Protector, but with kingly and more than kingly power. That his authority was lawful, never was pretended; he himself founded his right only in necessity; but Milton, having now tasted the honey of publick employment, would not return to hunger and philosophy, but, continuing to exercise his office under a manifest usurpation, betrayed to his power that liberty which he had defended. Nothing can be more just than that rebellion should end in slavery; that he who had justified the murder of his king, for some acts which seemed to him unlawful, should now sell his services, and his flatteries, to a tryrant, of whom it was evident that he could do nothing lawful.

He had now been blind for some years; but his vigour of intellect was such, that he was not dis-

abled to discharge his office of Latin secretary, or continue his controversies. His mind was too eager to be diverted, and too strong to be subdued.

About this time his first wife died in child-bed, having left him three daughters. As he probably did not much love her, he did not long continue the appearance of lamenting her; but after a short time married Catherine, the daughter of one captain Woodcock of Hackney; a woman doubtless educated in opinions like his own. She died, within a year, of child-birth, or some distemper that followed it; and her husband honoured her memory with a poor sonnet.

The first reply to Milton's *Defensio Populi* was published in 1651, called *Apologia pro Rege & Populo Anglicano, contra Johannis Polypragmatici (alias Miltoni) defensionem destructivam Regis & Populi.* Of this the author was not known; but Milton and his nephew Philips, under whose name he published an answer so much corrected by him, that it might be called his own, imputed it to Bramhal; and, knowing him no friend to regicides, thought themselves at liberty to treat him as if they had known what they only suspected.

Next year appeared *Regii Sanguinis clamor ad Cælum.* Of this the author was Peter du Moulin, who was afterwards prebendary of Canterbury; but Morus, or More, a French minister, having the care of its publication, was treated as the writer by Milton in his *Defensio Secunda,* and overwhelmed by such violence of invective, that he began to shrink under the tempest, and gave his persecutors the means of knowing the true author. Du Mou-

lin was now in great danger; but Milton's pride operated against his malignity; and both he and his friends were more willing that Du Moulin should escape than that he should be convicted of mistake.

In this second defence he shews that his eloquence is not merely satirical; the rudeness of his invective is equalled by the grossness of his flattery. "Deserimur, Cromuelle, tu solus superes, ad te "summa nostrarum rerum rediit, in te solo con- "sistit, insuperabili tuæ virtuti cedimus cuncti, ne- "mine vel obloquente, nisi qui æquales inæquales "ipse honores sibi quærit, aut digniori concessos "invidet, aut non intelligit nihil esse in societate "hominum magis vel Deo gratum, vel rationi con- "sentaneum, esse in civitate nihil æquius, nihil "utilius, quam potiri rerum dignissimum. Eum "te agnoscunt omnes, Cromuelle, ea tu civis max- "imus & gloriosissimus *, dux publici consilii, "exercituum fortissimorum imperator, pater patriæ "gessisti. Sic tu spontanea bonorum omnium & "animitus missa voce salutaris."

Cæsar, when he assumed the perpetual dictatorship, had not more servile or more elegant flattery. A translation may shew its servility; but its elegance is less attainable. Having exposed the unskilfulness or selfishness of the former government, "We were left," says Milton, "to ourselves: the "whole national interest fell into your hands, and "subsists only in your abilities. To your virtue, "overpowering and resistless, every man gives way, "except some who, without equal qualifications,

* It may be doubted whether *gloriosissimus* be here used with Milton's boasted purity. *Res gloriosa* is an *illustrious thing*; but *vir gloriosus* is commonly a *braggart*, as in *miles gloriosus*.

"aspire to equal honours, who envy the distinc-
"tions of merit greater than their own, or who
"have yet to learn, that in the coalition of human
"society nothing is more pleasing to God, or
"more agreeable to reason, than that the highest
"mind should have the sovereign power. Such,
"Sir, are you by general confession; such are the
"things atchieved by you, the greatest and most
"glorious of our countrymen, the director of our
"public councils, the leader of unconquered armies,
"the father of your country; for by that title
"does every good man hail you with sincere and
"voluntary praise."

Next year, having defended all that wanted defence, he found leisure to defend himself. He undertook his own vindication against More, whom he declares in his title to be justly called the author of the *Regii Sanguinis Clamor*. In this there is no want of vehemence or eloquence, nor does he forget his wonted wit. "Mores es? en Momus? an "uterque idem est?" He then remembers that *Morus* is Latin for a Mulberry-tree, and hints at the known transformation:

— Poma alba ferebat
Quæ post nigra tulit Morus.

With this piece ended his controversies; and he from this time gave himself up to his private studies and his civil employment.

As secretary to the Protector, he is supposed to have written the Declaration of the reasons for a war with Spain. His agency was considered as of great importance; for, when a treaty with Sweden was artfully suspended, the delay was publickly

imputed to Mr Milton's indisposition; and the Swedish agent was provoked to express his wonder, that only one man in England could write Latin, and that man blind.

Being now forty-seven years old, and seeing himself disencumbered from external interruptions, he seems to have recollected his former purposes, and to have resumed three great works which he had planned for his future employment; an epick poem, the history of his country, and a dictionary of the Latin tongue.

To collect a dictionary, seems a work of all others least practicable in a state of blindness, because it depends upon perpetual and minute inspection and collation. Nor would Milton probably have begun it, after he had lost his eyes; but, having had it always before him, he continued it, says Philips, *almost to his dying-day; but the papers were so discomposed and deficient, that they could not be fitted for the press.* The compilers of the Latin dictionary printed at Cambridge, had the use of those collections in three folios; but what was their fate afterwards is not known.

To compile a history from various authors, when they can only be consulted by other eyes, is not easy, nor possible, but with more skilful and attentive help than can be commonly obtained; and it was probably the difficulty of consulting and comparing that stopped Milton's narrative at the Conquest; a period at which affairs were not yet very intricate, nor authors very numerous.

For the subject of his epick poem, after much deliberation, *long chusing, and beginning late*, he fixed upon *Paradise Lost;* a design so comprehensive, that it could be justified only by success. He had

once designed to celebrate King Arthur, as he hints in his verses to Mansus; but *Arthur was reserved*, says Fenton *to another destiny*.

It appears, by some sketches of poetical projects left in manuscript, and to be seen in a library at Cambridge, that he had digested his thoughts on this subject into one of those wild dramas which were anciently called Mysteries; and Philips had seen what he terms part of a tragedy, beginning with the first ten lines of Satan's address to the Sun. These mysteries consist of allegorical persons; such as *Justice*, *Mercy*, *Faith*. Of the tragedy or mystery of *Paradise Lost* there are two plans:

The Persons.	*The Persons.*
Michael.	Moses.
Chorus of Angels.	Divine Justice, Wisdom,
Heavenly Love.	Heavenly Love.
Lucifer.	The Evening Star, Hesperus.
Adam, Eve, with the Serpent.	Chorus of Angels.
Conscience.	Lucifer.
Death.	Adam.
Labour, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, with others; Mutes.	Eve.
Faith.	Conscience.
Hope.	Labour, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, Fear, Death; Mutes.
Charity.	Faith.
	Hope.
	Charity.

PARADISE LOST,

The Persons

Moses προλογίζει, recounting how he assumed his true body; that it corrupts not, because it is with God in the mount; declares the like with Enoch and Elijah; besides the purity of the place, that certain pure winds, dews, and clouds, preserve it from corruption; whence exhorts to the sight of God; tells they cannot see Adam in the state of innocence by reason of their sin.

Justice, Mercy, Wisdom, } debating what should become of man, if he fall.
Chorus of Angels singing a hymn of the Creation.

ACT II.

Heavenly Love.
Evening Star.
Chorus sing the marriage-song, and describe Paradise.

ACT III.

Lucifer contriving Adam's ruin.
Chorus fears for Adam, and relates Lucifer's rebellion and fall.

ACT IV.

Adam, Eve, } fallen.
Conscience cites them to God's examination.
Chorus bewails, and tells the good Adam has lost.

ACT V.

Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise.
———— presented by an angel with
Labour, Grief, Hatred, Envy, War,
Famine, Pestilence, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, Fear, Death, } Mutes.
To whom he gives their names. Likewise Winter, Heat, Tempest, &c.
Faith,
Hope, } comfort him and instruct him.
Charity,

Chorus briefly concludes.

Such was his first design, which could have produced only an allegory, or mystery. The following sketch seems to have attained more maturity.

ADAM UNPARADISED:

The angel Gabriel, either descending or entering; shewing, since this globe was created, his frequency as much on earth as in heaven; describes Paradise. Next, the chorus, shewing the reason of his coming to keep his watch in Paradise, after Lucifer's rebellion, by command from God; and withal expressing his desire to see and know more concerning this excellent new creature, man. The angel Gabriel, as by his name signifying a prince of power, tracing Paradise with a more free office, passes by the station of the Chorus,

and, desired by them, relates what he knew of man; as the creation of Eve, with their love and marriage. After this, Lucifer appears; after his overthrow, bemoans himself, seeks revenge on man. The Chorus prepare resistance on his first approach. At last, after discourse of enmity on either side, he departs: whereat the Chorus sings of the battle and victory in Heaven, against him and his accomplices: as before, after the first act, was sung a hymn of the creation. Here again may appear Lucifer, relating and insulting in what he had done to the destruction of man. Man next, and Eve having by this time been seduced by the Serpent, appears confusedly covered with leaves. Conscience in a shape accuses him; Justice cites him to a place whither Jehovah called for him. In the mean while, the Chorus entertains the stage, and is informed by some angel the manner of the fall. Here the Chorus bewails Adam's fall; Adam then and Eve return; accuse one another; but especially Adam lays the blame to his wife; is stubborn in his offence. Justice appears, reasons with him, convinces him. The Chorus admonisheth Adam, and bids him beware Lucifer's example of impenitence. The angel is sent to banish them out of Paradise; but before causes to pass before his eyes, in shapes, a mask of all the evils of this life and world. He is humbled, relents, despairs; at last appears Mercy, comforts him, promises the Messiah; then calls in Faith, Hope, and Charity; instructs him; he repents, gives God the glory, submits to his penalty. The Chorus briefly concludes.—Compare this with the former draught.

These are very imperfect rudiments of *Paradise*

Lost; but it is pleasant to see great works in their seminal state, pregnant with latent possibilities of excellence; nor could there be any more delightful entertainment than to trace their gradual growth and expansion, and to observe how they are sometimes suddenly advanced by accidental hints, and sometimes slowly improved by steady meditation.

Invention is almost the only literary labour which blindness cannot obstruct, and therefore he naturally solaced his solitude by the indulgence of his fancy, and the melody of his numbers. He had done what he knew to be necessarily previous to poetical excellence; he had made himself acquainted with *seemly arts and affairs:* his comprehension was extended by various knowledge, and his memory stored with intellectual treasures. He was skilful in many languages, and had by reading and composition attained the full mastery of his own. He would have wanted little help from books, had he retained the power of perusing them.

But while his greater designs were advancing, having now, like many other authors, caught the love of publication, he amused himself, as he could, with little productions. He sent to the press (1658) a manuscript of Raleigh, called *The Cabinet Council;* and next year gratified his malevolence to the clergy, by a *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Cases, and the Means of removing Hirelings out of the Church.*

Oliver was now dead; Richard was constrained to resign: the system of extemporary government, which had been held together only by force, naturally fell into fragments when that force was taken away; and Milton saw himself and his cause

in equal danger. But he had still hope of doing something. He wrote letters, which Toland has published, to such men as he thought friends to the new commonwealth; and even in the year of the Restoration he *bated no jot of heart or hope*, but was fantastical enough to think that the nation, agitated as it was, might be settled by a pamphlet, called *A ready and easy Way to establish a free Commonwealth*; which was, however, enough considered to be both seriously and ludicrously answered.

The obstinate enthusiasm of the commonwealth-men was very remarkable. When the King was apparently returning, Harrington, with a few associates as fanatical as himself, used to meet, with all the gravity of political importance, to settle an equal government by rotation; and Milton, kicking when he could strike no longer, was foolish enough to publish, a few weeks before the Restoration, *Notes* upon a sermon preached by one Griffiths, intituled, *The Fear of God and the King*. To these notes an answer was written by L'Estrange, in a pamphlet petulantly called *No Blind Guides*.

But whatever Milton could write, or men of greater activity could do, the King was now about to be restored with the irresistible approbation of the people. He was therefore no longer secretary, and was consequently obliged to quit the house which he held by his office; and, proportioning his sense of danger to his opinion of the importance of his writings, thought it convenient to seek some shelter, and hid himself for a time in Bartholomew-Close, by West-Smithfield.

I cannot but remark a kind of respect, perhaps

unconsciously, paid to this great man by his biographers: every house in which he resided is historically mentioned, as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place that he honoured by his presence.

The King, with lenity of which the world has had perhaps no other example, declined to be the judge or avenger of his own or his father's wrongs; and promised to admit into the act of oblivion all, except those whom the Parliament should except; and the Parliament doomed none to capital punishment but the wretches who had immediately co-operated in the murder of the King. Milton was certainly not one of them; he had only justified what they had done.

This justification was indeed sufficiently offensive; and (June 16) an order was issued to seize Milton's *Defence*, and Goodwin's *Obstructors of Justice*, another book of the same tendency, and burn them by the common hangman. The attorney-general was ordered to prosecute the authors; but Milton was not seized, nor perhaps very diligently pursued.

Not long after (August 19) the flutter of innumerable bosoms was stilled by an act, which the King, that his mercy might want no recommendation of elegance, rather called an *act of oblivion* than of grace. Goodwin was named, with nineteen more, as incapacitated for any public trust; but of Milton there was no exception.

Of this tenderness shewn to Milton, the curiosity of mankind has not forborn to inquire the reason. Burnet thinks he was forgotten; but this is another instance which may confirm Dalrymple's observation, who says, "that whenever Burnet's

" narrations are examined, he appears to be mis-
" taken."

Forgotten he was not; for his prosecution was ordered; it must be therefore by design that he was included in the general oblivion. He is said to have had friends in the House, such as Marvel, Morrice, and Sir Thomas Clarges: and undoubtedly a man like him must have had influence. A very particular story of his escape is told by Richardson in his Memoirs, which he received from Pope, as delivered by Betterton, who might have heard it from Davenant. In the war between the King and Parliament, Davenant was made prisoner, and condemned to die; but was spared at the request of Milton. When the turn of success brought Milton into the like danger, Davenant repayed the benefit by appearing in his favour. Here is a reciprocation of generosity and gratitude so pleasing, that the tale makes its own way to credit. But if help were wanted, I know not where to find it. The danger of Davenant is certain from his own relation; but of his escape there is no account. Betterton's narration can be traced no higher; it is not known that he had it from Davenant. We are told that the benefit exchanged was life for life; but it seems not certain that Milton's life ever was in danger. Goodwin, who had committed the same kind of crime, escaped with incapacitation; and, as exclusion from publick trust is a punishment which the power of government can commonly inflict without the help of a particular law, it required no great interest to exempt Milton from a censure little more than verbal. Something may be reasonably ascribed to venera-

tion and compassion; to veneration of his abilities, and compassion for his distresses, which made it fit to forgive his malice for his learning. He was now poor and blind; and who would pursue with violence an illustrious enemy, depressed by fortune, and disarmed by nature?

The publication of the act of oblivion put him in the same condition with his fellow-subjects. He was, however, upon some pretence now not known, in the custody of the serjeant in December; and when he was released, upon his refusal of the fees demanded, he and the serjeant were called before the House. He was now safe within the shade of oblivion, and knew himself to be as much out of the power of a griping officer as any other man. How the question was determined is not known. Milton would hardly have contended, but that he knew himself to have right on his side.

He then removed to Jewin-Street, near Aldersgate-street; and being blind, and, by no means wealthy, wanted a domestick companion and attendant; and therefore, by the recommendation of Dr Paget, married Elizabeth Minshul, of a gentleman's family in Cheshire, probably without a fortune. All his wives were virgins; for he has declared that he thought it gross and indelicate to be a second husband: upon what other principles his choice was made cannot now be known; but marriage afforded not much of his happiness. The first wife left him in disgust, and was brought back only by terror; the second, indeed, seems to have been more a favourite, but her life was short. The third, as Philips relates, oppressed his children in his life-time, and cheated them at his death.

Soon after his marriage, according to an obscure story, he was offered the continuance of his employment, and, being pressed by his wife to accept it, answered, "You, like other women, want to "ride in your coach; my wish is to live and die "an honest man." If he considered the Latin secretary as exercising any of the powers of government, he that had shared authority, either with the Parliament or Cromwell, might have forborn to talk very loudly of his honesty; and if he thought the office purely ministerial, he certainly might have honestly retained it under the King. But this tale has too little evidence to deserve a disquisition; large offers and sturdy rejections are among the most common topicks of falsehood.

He had so much either of prudence or gratitude, that he forbore to disturb the new settlement with any of his political or ecclesiastical opinions, and from this time devoted himself to poetry and literature. Of his zeal for learning in all its parts, he gave a proof by publishing, the next year (1661), *Accidence commenced Grammar;* a little book which has nothing remarkable, but that its author, who had been lately defending the supreme powers of his country, and was then writing *Paradise Lost*, could descend from his elevation to rescue children from the perplexity of grammatical confusion, and the trouble of lessons unnecessarily repeated.

About this time Elwood the Quaker, being recommended to him as one who would read Latin to him for the advantage of his conversation, attended him every afternoon, except on Sundays. Milton, who, in his letter to Hartlib, had declared,

that *to read Latin with an English mouth is as ill a hearing as Law French*, required that Elwood should learn and practise the Italian pronunciation, which, he said, was necessary, if he would talk with foreigners. This seems to have been a task troublesome without use. There is little reason for preferring the Italian pronunciation to our own, except that it is more general; and to teach it to an Englishman is only to make him a foreigner at home. He who travels, if he speaks Latin, may so soon learn the sounds which every native gives it, that he need make no provision before his journey; and if strangers visit us, it is their business to practise such conformity to our modes as they expect from us in their own countries. Elwood complied with the directions, and improved himself by his attendance; for he relates, that Milton, having a curious ear, knew by his voice when he read what he did not understand, and would stop him, and *open the most difficult passages*.

In a short time he took a house in the Artillery Walk, leading to Bunhill Fields; the mention of which concludes the register of Milton's removals and habitations. He lived longer in this place than any other.

He was now busied by *Paradise Lost*. Whence he drew the original design has been variously conjectured by men who cannot bear to think themselves ignorant of that which, at last, neither diligence nor sagacity can discover. Some find the hint in an Italian tragedy. Voltaire tells a wild and unauthorised story of a farce seen by Milton in Italy, which opened thus: *Let the Rainbow be the Fiddlestick of the Fiddle of Heaven*. It has been

already shewn, that the first conception was a tragedy or mystery, not of a narrative, but a dramatick work, which he is supposed to have begun to reduce to its present form about the time (1655) when he finished his dispute with the defenders of the King.

He long before had promised to adorn his native country by some great performance, while he had yet perhaps no settled design, and was stimulated only by such expectations as naturally arose from the survey of his attainments, and the consciousness of his powers. What he should undertake, it was difficult to determine. He was *long chusing, and began late.*

While he was obliged to divide his time between his private studies and affairs of state, his poetical labour must have been often interrupted; and perhaps he did little more in that busy time than construct the narrative, adjust the episodes, proportion the parts, accumulate images and sentiments, and treasure in his memory, or preserve in writing, such hints as books or meditation would supply. Nothing particular is known of his intellectual operations while he was a statesman; for, having every help and accommodation at hand, he had no need of uncommon expedients.

Being driven from all publick stations, he is yet too great not to be traced by curiosity to his retirement; where he has been found by Mr Richardson, the fondest of his admirers, sitting *before his door in a grey coat of coarse cloth, in warm sultry weather, to enjoy the fresh air; and so, as in his own room, receiving the visits of the people of distinguished*

parts as well as quality. His visitors of high quality must now be imagined to be few; but men of parts might reasonably court the conversation of a man so generally illustrious, that foreigners are reported, by Wood, to have visited the house in Bread-street where he was born.

According to another account, he was seen in a small house, *neatly enough dressed in black clothes, sitting in a room hung with rusty green; pale but not cadaverous, with chalk stones in his hands. He said, that, if it were not for the gout, his blindness would be tolerable.*

In the intervals of his pain, being made unable to use the common exercises, he used to swing in a chair, and sometimes played upon an organ.

He was now confessedly and visibly employed upon his poem, of which the progress might be noted by those with whom he was familiar; for he was obliged, when he had composed as many lines as his memory would conveniently retain, to employ some friend in writing them, having, at least for part of the time, no regular attendant. This gave opportunity to observations and reports.

Mr Philips observes, that there was a very remarkable circumstance in the composure of *Paradise Lost*, "which I have a particular reason," says he, "to remember; for whereas I had the perusal "of it from the very beginning, for some years, "as I went from time to time to visit him, in par- "cels of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, "(which, being written by whatever hand came "next, might possibly want correction as to the "orthography and pointing), having, as the sum- "mer came on, not been shewed any for a consi-

"derable while, and desiring the reason thereof, "answered, that his vein never happily flowed but "from the Autumnal Equinox to the Vernal; and "that whatever he attempted at other times was "never to his satisfaction, though he courted his "fancy never so much; so that, in all the years he "was about this poem, he may be said to have "spent half his time therein."

Upon this relation Toland remarks, that in his opinion Philips has mistaken the time of the year; for Milton, in his Elegies, declares, that with the advance of the Spring he feels the increase of his poetical force, *redeunt in carmina vires*. To this it is answered, that Philips could hardly mistake time so well marked; and it may be added, that Milton might find different times of the year favourable to different parts of life. Mr Richardson conceives it impossible that *such a work should be suspended for six months, or for one. It may go on faster or slower, but it must go on.* By what necessity it must continually go on, or why it might not be laid aside and resumed, it is not easy to discover.

This dependence of the soul upon the seasons, those temporary and periodical ebbs and flows of intellect, may, I suppose, justly be derided as the fumes of vain imagination. *Sapiens dominabitur astris*. The author that thinks himself weather-bound will find, with a little help from hellebore, that he is only idle or exhausted. But while this notion has possession of the head, it produces the inability which it supposes. Our powers owe much of their energy to our hopes; *possunt quia posse videntur*. When success seems attainable, diligence is enforced; but when it is admitted that

the faculties are suppressed by a cross wind, or a cloudy sky, the day is given up without resistance; for who can contend with the course of Nature?

From such prepossessions Milton seems not to have been free. There prevailed in his time an opinion, that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of Nature. It was suspected that the whole creation languished, that neither trees nor animals had the height or bulk of their predecessors, and that every thing was daily sinking by gradual diminution. Milton appears to suspect that souls partake of the general degeneracy, and is not without some fear that his book is to be written in *an age too late* for heroick poesy.

Another opinion wanders about the world, and sometimes finds reception among wise men; an opinion that restrains the operations of the mind to particular regions, and supposes that a luckless mortal may be born in a degree of latitude too high or too low for wisdom or for wit. From this fancy, wild as it is, he had not wholly cleared his head, when he feared lest the *climate* of his country might be *too cold* for flights of imagination.

Into a mind already occupied by such fancies, another not more reasonable might easily find its way. He that could fear lest his genius had fallen upon too old a world, or too chill a climate, might consistently magnify to himself the influence of the seasons, and believe his faculties to be vigorous only half the year.

His submission to the seasons was at least more reasonable than his dread of decaying nature, or a frigid zone; for general causes must operate uni-

formly in a general abatement of mental power; if less could be performed by the writer, less likewise would content the judges of his work. Among this lagging race of frosty grovellers he might still have risen into eminence by producing something which *they should not willingly let die.* However inferior to the heroes who were born in better ages, he might still be great among his contemporaries, with the hope of growing every day greater in the dwindle of posterity. He might still be a giant among the pygmies, the one-eyed monarch of the blind.

Of his artifices of study, or particular hours of composition, we have little account, and there was perhaps little to be told. Richardson, who seems to have been very diligent in his inquiries, but discovers always a wish to find Milton discriminated from other men, relates, that "he would some-"times lie awake whole nights, but not a verse "could he make; and on a sudden his poetical fa-"culty would rush upon him with an *impetus* or "*æstrum*, and his daughter was immediately called "to secure what came. At other times he would "dictate perhaps forty lines in a breath, and then "reduce them to half the number."

These bursts of light, and involutions of darkness, these transient and involuntary excursions and retrocessions of invention, having some appearance of deviation from the common train of Nature, are eagerly caught by the lovers of a wonder. Yet something of this inequality happens to every man in every mode of exertion, manual or mental. The mechanick cannot handle his hammer and his file at all times with equal dexterity; there are hours,

he knows not why, when *his hand is out.* By Mr Richardson's relation, casually conveyed, much regard cannot be claimed. That, in his intellectual hour, Milton called for his daughter *to secure what came*, may be questioned; for unluckily it happens to be known that his daughters were never taught to write; nor would he have been obliged, as is universally confessed, to have employed any casual visitor in disburthening his memory, if his daughter could have performed the office.

The story of reducing his exuberance has been told of other authors, and, though doubtless true of every fertile and copious mind, seems to have been gratuitously transferred to Milton.

What he has told us, and we cannot now know more, is, that he composed much of this poem in the night and morning, I suppose before his mind was disturbed with common business; and that he poured out with great fluency his *unpremeditated verse.* Versification, free, like his, from the distresses of rhyme, must, by a work so long, be made prompt and habitual; and, when his thoughts were once adjusted, the words would come at his command.

At what particular times of his life the parts of his work were written, cannot often be known. The beginning of the third book shews that he had lost his sight; and the Introduction to the seventh, that the return of the King had clouded him with discountenance; and that he was offended by the licentious festivity of the Restoration. There are no other internal notes of time. Milton, being now cleared from all effects of his disloyalty, had nothing required from him but the common

duty of living in quiet, to be rewarded with the common right of protection; but this, which, when he skulked from the approach of his King, was perhaps more than he hoped, seems not to have satisfied him; for no sooner is he safe, than he finds himself in danger, *fallen on evil days and evil tongues, and with darkness and with danger compass'd round.* This darkness, had his eyes been better employed, had undoubtedly deserved compassion; but to add the mention of danger was ungrateful and unjust. He was fallen indeed on *evil days;* the time was come in which regicides could no longer boast their wickedness. But of *evil tongues* for Milton to complain required impudence at least equal to his other powers; Milton, whose warmest advocates must allow, that he never spared any asperity of reproach or brutality of insolence.

But the charge itself seems to be false; for it would be hard to recollect any reproach cast upon him, either serious or ludicrous, through the whole remaining part of his life. He pursued his studies, or his amusements, without persecution, molestation, or insult. Such is the reverence paid to great abilities, however misused: they, who contemplated in Milton the scholar and the wit, were contented to forget the reviler of his King.

When the plague (1665) raged in London, Milton took refuge at Chalfont in Bucks; where Elwood, who had taken the house for him, first saw a complete copy of *Paradise Lost*, and, having perused it, said to him, "Thou hast said a great "deal upon *Paradise Lost;* what hast thou to say upon *Paradise Found?*"

Next year, when the danger of infection had ceased, he returned to Bunhill-fields, and designed the publication of his poem. A license was necessary, and he could expect no great kindness from a chaplain of the archbishop of Canterbury. He seems, however, to have been treated with tenderness; for though objections were made to particular passages, and among them to the simile of the sun eclipsed in the first book, yet the licence was granted; and he sold his copy, April 27, 1667, to Samuel Simmons, for an immediate payment of five pounds, with a stipulation to receive five pounds more when thirteen hundred should be sold of the first edition; and again, five pounds after the sale of the same number of the second edition; and another five pounds after the same sale of the third. None of the three editions were to be extended beyond fifteen hundred copies.

The first edition was of ten books, in a small quarto. The titles were varied from year to year; and an advertisement and the arguments of the books were omitted in some copies, and inserted in others.

The sale gave him in two years a right to his second payment, for which the receipt was signed April 26, 1669. The second edition was not given till 1674; it was printed in small octavo; and the number of books was increased to twelve, by a division of the seventh and twelfth; and some other small improvements were made. The third edition was published in 1678; and the widow, to whom the copy was then to devolve, sold all her claims to Simmons for eight pounds, according to her receipt given Dec. 21, 1680. Simmons had

already agreed to transfer the whole right to Brabazon Aylmer for twenty-five pounds; and Aylmer sold to Jacob Tonson half, August 17, 1683, half, March 24, 1690, at a price considerably enlarged. In the history of *Paradise Lost* a deduction thus minute will rather gratify than fatigue.

The slow sale and tardy reputation of this poem have been always mentioned as evidences of neglected merit, and of the uncertainty of literary fame; and inquiries have been made, and conjectures offered, about the causes of its long obscurity and late reception. But has the case been truly stated? Have not lamentation and wonder been lavished on an evil that was never felt?

That in the reigns of Charles and James the *Paradise Lost* received no publick acclamations, is readily confessed. Wit and literature were on the side of the Court: and who that solicited favour or fashion would venture to praise the defender of the regicides? All that he himself could think his due, from *evil tongues* in *evil days*, was that reverential silence which was generously preserved. But it cannot be inferred, that his poem was not read, or not, however unwillingly, admired.

The sale, if it be considered, will justify the publick. Those who have no power to judge of past times but by their own, should always doubt their conclusions. The call for books was not in Milton's age what it is in the present. To read was not then a general amusement; neither traders, nor often gentlemen, thought themselves disgraced by ignorance. The women had not then aspired to literature, nor was every house supplied with a closet of knowledge. Those, indeed, who

professed learning, were not less learned than at any other time; but of that middle race of students who read for pleasure or accomplishment, and who buy the numerous products of modern typography, the number was then comparatively small. To prove the paucity of readers, it may be sufficient to remark, that the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakespeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies.

The sale of thirteen hundred copies in two years, in opposition to so much recent enmity, and to a style of versification new to all and disgusting to many, was an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius. The demand did not immediately increase; for many more readers than were supplied at first the nation did not afford. Only three thousand were sold in eleven years; for it forced its way without assistance; its admirers did not dare to publish their opinion; and the opportunities now given of attracting notice by advertisements were then very few; the means of proclaiming the publication of new books have been produced by that general literature which now pervades the nation through all its ranks.

But the reputation and price of the copy still advanced, till the Revolution put an end to the secrecy of love, and *Paradise Lost* broke into open view with sufficient security of kind reception.

Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked its reputation stealing its way, in a kind of subterraneous current, through

fear and silence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little disappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with steady consciousness, and waiting without impatience the vicissitudes of opinion, and the impartiality of a future generation.

In the mean time he continued his studies, and supplied the want of sight by a very odd expedient, of which Philips gives the following account:

Mr Philips tells us, "that though our Author "had daily about him one or other to read, some "persons of man's estate, who, of their own ac- "cord, greedily catched at the opportunity of be- "ing his readers, that they might as well reap the "benefit of what they read to him, as oblige him "by the benefit of their reading; and others of "younger years were sent by their parents to the "same end; yet excusing only the eldest daughter "by reason of her bodily infirmity and difficult "utterance of speech (which, to say truth, I "doubt was the principal cause of excusing her), "the other two were condemned to the perform- "ance of reading, and exactly pronouncing of all "the languages of whatever book he should, at one "time or other, think fit to peruse, viz. the He- "brew (and I think the Syriac), the Greek, the "Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French. All "which sorts of books to be confined to read, "without understanding one word, must needs be "a trial of patience almost beyond endurance. "Yet it was endured by both for a long time, "though the irksomeness of this employment "could not be always concealed, but broke out "more and more into expressions of uneasiness;

" so that at length they were all, even the eldest " also, sent out to learn some curious and ingenious " sorts of manufacture, that are proper for women " to learn, particularly embroideries in gold or " silver."

In this scene of misery, which this mode of intellectual labour sets before our eyes, it is hard to determine whether the daughters or the father are most to be lamented. A language not understood can never be so read as to give pleasure, and very seldom so as to convey meaning. If few men would have had resolution to write books with such embarrassments, few likewise would have wanted ability to find some better expedient.

Three years after his *Paradise Lost* (1667), he published his *History of England*, comprizing the whole fable of Geoffry of Monmouth, and continued to the Norman Invasion. Why he should have given the first part, which he seems not to believe, and which is universally rejected, it is difficult to conjecture. The style is harsh; but it has something of rough vigour, which perhaps may often strike, though it cannot please.

On this history the licenser again fixed his claws, and before he would transmit it to the press tore out several parts. Some censures of the Saxon monks were taken away, lest they should be applied to the modern clergy; and a character of the Long Parliament, and Assembly of Divines, was excluded; of which the author gave a copy to the Earl of Anglesea, and which, being afterwards published, has been since inserted in its proper place.

The same year were printed *Paradise Regained*,

and *Sampson Agonistes*, a tragedy written in imitation of the Ancients, and never designed by the author for the stage. As these poems were published by another bookseller, it has been asked, whether Simmons was discouraged from receiving them by the slow sale of the former. Why a writer changed his bookseller a hundred years ago, I am far from hoping to discover. Certainly, he who in two years sells thirteen hundred copies of a volume in quarto, bought for two payments of five pounds each, has no reason to repent his purchase.

When Milton shewed *Paradise Regained* to Elwood, "This," said he, "is owing to you; for "you put it in my head by the question you put "to me at Chalfont, which otherwise I had not "thought of."

His last poetical offspring was his favourite. He could not, as Elwood relates, endure to hear *Paradise Lost* preferred to *Paradise Regained*. Many causes may vitiate a writer's judgment of his own works. On that which has cost him much labour he sets a high value, because he is unwilling to think that he has been diligent in vain; what has been produced without toilsome efforts is considered with delight, as a proof of vigorous faculties and fertile invention; and the last work, whatever it be, has necessarily most of the grace of novelty. Milton, however it happened, had this prejudice, and had it to himself.

To that multiplicity of attainments, and extent of comprehension, that entitled this great author to our veneration, may be added a kind of humble dignity, which did not disdain the meanest services to literature. The epick poet, the controvertist,

the politician, having already descended to accommodate children with a book of rudiments, now, in the last years of his life, composed a book of Logick for the initiation of students in philosophy; and published (1672) *Artis Logicæ plenior Institutio ad Petri Rami Methodum concinnata;* that is, "A new Scheme of Logick, according to the "Method of Ramus." I know not whether, even in this book, he did not intend an act of hostility against the Universities; for Ramus was one of the first oppugners of the old philosophy, who disturbed with innovations the quiet of the schools.

His polemical disposition again revived. He had now been safe so long, that he forgot his fears, and published *a Treatise of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and the best means to prevent the Growth of Popery.*

But this little tract is modestly written, with respectful mention of the Church of England, and an appeal to the Thirty-nine Articles. His principle of toleration is, agreement in the sufficiency of the Scriptures; and he extends it to all who, whatever their opinions are, profess to derive them from the sacred books. The Papists appeal to other testimonies, and are therefore, in his opinion, not to be permitted the liberty of either publick or private worship: for though they plead conscience, *we have no warrant,* he says, *to regard conscience which is not grounded in Scripture.*

Those who are not convinced by his reasons, may be perhaps delighted with his wit. The term *Roman Catholick is,* he says, *one of the Pope's bulls; it is particular universal, or catholick schismatick.*

He has, however, something better. As the best preservative against Popery, he recommends the diligent perusal of the Scriptures, a duty, from which he warns the busy part of mankind not to think themselves excused.

He now reprinted his juvenile poems, with some additions.

In the last year of his life he sent to the press, seeming to take delight in publication, a collection of Familiar Epistles in Latin; to which, being too few to make a volume, he added some academical exercises, which perhaps he perused with pleasure, as they recalled to his memory the days of youth, but for which nothing but veneration for his name could now procure a reader.

When he had attained his sixty-sixth year, the gout, with which he had been long tormented, prevailed over the enfeebled powers of nature. He died by a quiet and silent expiration, about the 10th of November, 1674, at his house in Bunhill-fields; and was buried next his father in the chancel of St Giles at Cripplegate. His funeral was very splendidly and numerously attended.

Upon his grave there is supposed to have been no memorial; but in our time a monument has been erected in Westminster Abbey, *To the Author of Paradise Lost*, by Mr Benson, who has in the inscription bestowed more words upon himself than upon Milton.

When the inscription for the monument of Philips, in which he was said to be *soli Miltono secundus*, was exhibited to Dr Sprat, then dean of Westminster, he refused to admit it; the name of Milton was, in his opinion, too detestable to be

read on the wall of a building dedicated to devotion. Atterbury, who succeeded him, being author of the inscription, permitted its reception. "And such has been the change of publick opi-"nion," said Dr Gregory, from whom I heard this account, "that I have seen erected in the "church a statue of that man, whose name I once "knew considered as a pollution of its walls."

Milton has the reputation of having been in his youth eminently beautiful, so as to have been called the Lady of his college. His hair, which was of a light brown, parted at the fore-top, and hung down upon his shoulders, according to the picture which he has given of Adam. He was, however, not of the heroick stature, but rather below the middle size, according to Mr Richardson, who mentions him as having narrowly escaped from being short and thick. He was vigorous and active, and delighted in the exercise of the sword, in which he is related to have been eminently skilful. His weapon was, I believe, not the rapier, but the back-sword, of which he recommends the use in his book on Education.

His eyes are said never to have been bright; but, if he was a dexterous fencer, they must have been once quick.

His domestick habits, so far as they are known, were those of a severe student. He drank little strong drink of any kind, and fed without excess in quantity, and in his earlier years without delicacy of choice. In his youth he studied late at night; but afterwards changed his hours, and rested in bed from nine to four in the summer, and five in the winter. The course of his day was best

known after he was blind. When he first rose, he heard a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and then studied till twelve; then took some exercise for an hour; then dined, then played on the organ, and sang, or heard another sing; then studied to six; then entertained his visitors till eight; then supped, and, after a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water, went to bed.

So is his life described; but this even tenour appears attainable only in colleges. He that lives in the world will sometimes have the succession of his practice broken and confused. Visitors, of whom Milton is represented to have had great numbers, will come and stay unseasonably; business, of which every man has some, must be done when others will do it.

When he did not care to rise early, he had something read to him by his bedside; perhaps at this time his daughters were employed. He composed much in the morning, and dictated in the day, sitting obliquely in an elbow-chair, with his leg thrown over the arm.

Fortune appears not to have had much of his care. In the civil wars he lent his personal estate to the Parliament; but when, after the contest was decided, he solicited repayment, he met not only with neglect, but sharp rebuke; and, having tired both himself and his friends, was given up to poverty and hopeless indignation, till he shewed how able he was to do greater service. He was then made Latin secretary, with two hundred pounds a-year, and had a thousand pounds for his *Defence of the People*. His widow, who, after his death, retired to Namptwich, in Cheshire, and died about

1729, is said to have reported that he lost two thousand pounds by entrusting it to a scrivener; and that, in the general depredation upon the Church, he had grasped an estate of about sixty pounds a-year, belonging to Westminster Abbey, which, like other sharers of the plunder of rebellion, he was afterwards obliged to return. Two thousand pounds, which he had placed in the Excise-office, were also lost. There is yet no reason to believe that he was ever reduced to indigence. His wants, being few, were competently supplied. He sold his library before his death, and left his family fifteen hundred pounds, on which his widow laid hold, and only gave one hundred to each of his daughters.

His literature was unquestionably great. He read all the languages which are considered either as learned or polite; Hebrew, with its two dialects, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish. In Latin his skill was such as places him in the first rank of writers and criticks; and he appears to have cultivated Italian with uncommon diligence. The books in which his daughter, who used to read to him, represented him as most delighting, after Homer, which he could almost repeat, were Ovid's Metamorphoses and Euripides. His Euripides is, by Mr Cradock's kindness, now in my hands: the margin is sometimes noted; but I have found nothing remarkable.

Of the English poets he set most value upon Spenser, Shakespeare, and Cowley. Spenser was apparently his favourite; Shakespeare he may easily be supposed to like, with every other skilful reader; but I should not have expected that Cow-

ley, whose ideas of excellence were so different from his own, would have had much of his approbation. His character of Dryden, who sometimes visited him, was, that he was a good rhymist, but no poet.

His theological opinions are said to have been first Calvinistical; and afterwards, perhaps when he began to hate the Presbyterians, to have tended towards Arminianism. In the mixed questions of theology and government, he never thinks that he can recede far enough from popery, or prelacy: but what Baudius says of Erasmus seems applicable to him, *magis habuit quod fugeret, quam quod sequeretur.* He had determined rather what to condemn, than what to approve. He has not associated himself with any denomination of Protestants; we know rather what he was not, than what he was. He was not of the Church of Rome; he was not of the Church of England.

To be of no Church is dangerous. Religion, of which the rewards are distant, and which is animated only by Faith and Hope, will glide by degrees out of the mind, unless it be invigorated and reimpressed by external ordinances, by stated calls to worship, and the salutary influence of example. Milton, who appears to have had full conviction of the truth of Christianity, and to have regarded the Holy Scriptures with the profoundest veneration, to have been untainted by any heretical peculiarity of opinion, and to have lived in a confirmed belief of the immediate and occasional agency of Providence, yet grew old without any visible worship. In the distribution of his hours, there was

no hour of prayer, either solitary or with his household; omitting publick prayers, he omitted all.

Of this omission the reason has been sought upon a supposition which ought never to be made, that men live with their own approbation, and justify their conduct to themselves. Prayer certainly was not thought superfluous by him, who represents our first parents as praying acceptably in the state of innocence, and efficaciously after their fall. That he lived without prayer can hardly be affirmed; his studies and meditations were an habitual prayer. The neglect of it in his family was probably a fault for which he condemned himself, and which he intended to correct, but that death, as too often happens, intercepted his reformation.

His political notions were those of an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than that *a popular government was the most frugal; for the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth.* It is surely a very shallow policy that supposes money to be the chief good: and even this, without considering that the support and expence of a Court is for the most part, only a paticular kind of traffick, for which money is circulated, without any national impoverishment.

Milton's republicanism was, I am afraid, founded in an envious hatred of greatness, and a sullen desire of independence; in petulance impatient of controul, and pride disdainful of superiority. He hated monarchs in the State, and prelates in the Church; for he hated all whom he was required to obey. It is to be suspected, that his predomi-

nant desire was to destroy rather than establish, and that he felt not so much the love of liberty as repugnance to authority.

It has been observed, that they who most loudly clamour for liberty do not most liberally grant it. What we know of Milton's character, in domestick relations, is, that he was severe and arbitrary. His family consisted of women; and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinate and inferior beings. That his own daughters might not break the ranks, he suffered them to be depressed by a mean and penurious education. He thought women made only for obedience, and man only for rebellion.

Of his family some account may be expected. His sister, first married to Mr Philips, afterwards married to Mr Agar, a friend of her first husband, who succeeded him in the Crown-office. She had, by her first husband, Edward and John, the two nephews whom Milton educated; and, by her second, two daughters.

His brother, Sir Christopher, had two daughters, Mary and Catharine; and a son Thomas, who succeeded Agar in the Crown-office, and left a daughter living in 1749 in Grosvenor-street.

Milton had children only by his first wife; Anne, Mary, and Deborah. Anne, though deformed, married a master-builder, and died of her first child. Mary died single. Deborah married Abraham Clark, a weaver in Spitalfields, and lived seventy-six years, to August 1727. This is the daughter of whom publick mention has been made. She could repeat the first lines of Homer, the Me-

tamorphoses, and some of Euripides, by having often read them. Yet here incredulity is ready to make a stand. Many repetitions are necessary to fix in the memory lines not understood; and why should Milton wish or want to hear them so often? These lines were at the beginning of the poems. Of a book written in a language not understood, the beginning raises no more attention than the end; and as those that understand it know commonly the beginning best, its rehearsal will seldom be necessary. It is not likely that Milton required any passage to be so much repeated as that his daughter could learn it; nor likely that he desired the initial lines to be read at all; nor that the daughter, weary of the drudgery of pronouncing unideal sounds, would voluntarily commit them to memory.

To this gentlewoman Addison made a present, and promised some establishment, but died soon after. Queen Caroline sent her fifty guineas. She had seven sons and three daughters; but none of them had any children, except her son Caleb and her daughter Elizabeth. Caleb went to Fort St George in the East Indies, and had two sons, of whom nothing is now known. Elizabeth married Thomas Foster, a weaver in Spitalfields; and had seven children, who all died. She kept a petty grocer's or chandler's shop, first at Holloway, and afterwards in Cock-lane, near Shoreditch Church. She knew little of her grandfather, and that little was not good. She told of his harshness to his daughters, and his refusal to have them taught to write; and, in opposition to other accounts, repre-

sented him as delicate, though temperate, in his diet.

In 1750, April 5, *Comus* was played for her benefit. She had so little acquaintance with diversion or gaiety, that she did not know what was intended when a benefit was offered her. The profits of the night were only one hundred and thirty pounds, though Dr Newton brought a large contribution; and twenty pounds were given by Tonson, a man who is to be praised as often as he is named. Of this sum one hundred pounds were placed in the stocks, after some debate between her and her husband in whose name it should be entered; and the rest augmented their little stock, with which they removed to Islington. This was the greatest benefaction that *Paradise Lost* ever procured the author's descendants; and to this he, who has now attempted to relate his Life, had the honour of contributing a Prologue.

In the examination of Milton's poetical works, I shall pay so much regard to time as to begin with his juvenile productions. For his early pieces he seems to have had a degree of fondness not very laudable; what he has once written he resolves to preserve, and gives to the publick an unfinished poem, which he broke off because he was *nothing satisfied with what he had done*, supposing his readers less nice than himself. These preludes to his future labours are in Italian, Latin, and English. Of the Italian I cannot pretend to speak as a critick; but I have heard them commended by a man well qualified to decide their merit. The Latin pieces are lusciously elegant; but the delight which they afford is rather by the exquisite imitation of the ancient writers, by the purity of the diction, and the harmony of the numbers, than by any power of invention, or vigour of sentiment. They are not all of equal value; the elegies excel the odes; and some of the exercises on Gunpowder Treason might have been spared.

The English poems, though they make no promises of *Paradise Lost*, have this evidence of genius, that they have a cast original and unborrowed. But their peculiarity is not excellence; if they differ from the verses of others, they differ for the worse; for they are too often distinguished by repulsive harshness; the combinations of words are new, but they are not pleasing; the rhymes and epithets seem to be laboriously sought, and violently applied.

That in the early parts of his life he wrote with much care appears from his manuscripts, happily

preserved at Cambridge, in which many of his smaller works are found as they were first written, with the subsequent corrections. Such reliques shew how excellence is acquired; what we hope ever to do with ease, we must learn first to do with diligence.

Those who admire the beauties of this great poet sometimes force their own judgment into false approbation of his little pieces, and prevail upon themselves to think that admirable which is only singular. All that short compositions can commonly attain is neatness and eleganee. Milton never learned the art of doing little things with grace; he overlooked the milder excellence of suavity and softness; he was a *Lion* that had no skill *in dandling the Kid.*

One of the poems on which much praise has been bestowed is Lycidas; of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain, and the numbers unpleasing. What beauty there is we must therefore seek in the sentiments and images. It is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion; for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions. Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of rough *satyrs* and *fauns with cloven heel.* Where there is leisure for fiction, there is little grief.

In this poem there is no nature, for there is no truth; there is no art, for there is nothing new. Its form is that of a pastoral; easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting; whatever images it can supply are long ago exhausted; and its inherent improbability always forces dissatisfaction on the mind.

When Cowley tells of Hervey, that they studied together, it is easy to suppose how much he must miss the companion of his labours, and the partner of his discoveries; but what image of tenderness can be excited by these lines?

> We drove a field, and both together heard
> What time the grey fly winds her sultry horn,
> Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night.

We know that they never drove a field, and that they had no flocks to batten; and though it be allowed that the representation may be allegorical, the true meaning is so uncertain and remote, that it is never sought, because it cannot be known when it is found.

Among the flocks, and copses, and flowers, appear the Heathen deities; Jove and Phœbus, Neptune and Æolus, with a long train of mythological imagery, such as a college easily supplies. Nothing can less display knowledge, or less exercise invention, than to tell how a shepherd has lost his companion, and must now feed his flocks alone, without any judge of his skill in piping; and how one god asks another god what is become of Lycidas, and how neither god can tell. He who thus grieves will excite no sympathy; he who thus praises will confer no honour.

This poem has yet a grosser fault. With these trifling fictions are mingled the most awful and sacred truths, such as ought never to be polluted with such irreverend combinations. The shepherd likewise is now a feeder of sheep, and afterwards an ecclesiastical pastor, a superintendant of a Chris-

tian flock. Such equivocations are always unskilful; but here they are indecent, and at least approach to impiety, of which, however, I believe the writer not to have been conscious.

Such is the power of reputation justly acquired, that its blaze drives away the eye from nice examination. Surely no man could have fancied that he read *Lycidas* with pleasure, had he not known the author.

Of the two pieces, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, I believe, opinion is uniform; every man that reads them, reads them with pleasure. The author's design is not, what Theobald has remarked, merely to shew how objects derive their colours from the mind, by representing the operation of the same things upon the gay and the melancholy temper, or upon the same man as he is differently disposed; but rather how, among the successive variety of appearances, every disposition of mind takes hold on those by which it may be gratified.

The *cheerful* man hears the lark in the morning; the *pensive* man hears the nightingale in the evening. The *cheerful* man sees the cock strut, and hears the horn and hounds echo in the wood; then walks, *not unseen*, to observe the glory of the rising sun, or listen to the singing milk-maid, and view the labours of the plowman and the mower; then casts his eyes about him over scenes of smiling plenty, and looks up to the distant tower, the residence of some fair inhabitant; thus he pursues real gaiety through a day of labour or of play, and delights himself at night with the fanciful narratives of superstitious ignorance.

The *pensive* man, at one time, walks *unseen* to muse at midnight; and at another hears the sullen curfew. If the weather drives him home, he sits in a room lighted only by *glowing embers;* or by a lonely lamp outwatches the north star, to discover the habitation of separate souls, and varies the shades of meditation, by contemplating the magnificent or pathetick scenes of tragick and epick poetry. When the morning comes, a morning gloomy with rain and wind, he walks into the dark trackless woods, falls asleep by some murmuring water, and with melancholy enthusiasm expects some dream of prognostication, or some musick played by aërial performers.

Both Mirth and Melancholy are solitary, silent inhabitants of the breast, that neither receive nor transmit communication; no mention is therefore made of a philosophical friend, or a pleasant companion. The seriousness does not arise from any participation of calamity, nor the gaiety from the pleasures of the bottle.

The man of *cheerfulness*, having exhausted the country, tries what *towered cities* will afford, and mingles with scenes of splendour, gay assemblies, and nuptial festivities; but he mingles a mere spectator, as, when the learned comedies of Jonson, or the wild dramas of Shakespeare, are exhibited, he attends the theatre.

The *pensive* man never loses himself in crowds, but walks the cloister, or frequents the cathedral. Milton probably had not yet forsaken the church.

Both his characters delight in musick; but he seems to think that cheerful notes would have obtained from Pluto a complete dismission of Eury-

dice, of whom solemn sounds only procured a conditional release.

For the old age of Cheerfulness he makes no provision; but Melancholy he conducts with great dignity to the close of life. His Cheerfulness is without levity, and his Pensiveness without asperity.

Through these two poems the images are properly selected and nicely distinguished; but the colours of the diction seem not sufficiently discriminated. I know not whether the characters are kept sufficiently apart. No mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy; but I am afraid that I always meet some melancholy in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination.

The greatest of his juvenile performances is the *Mask of Comus*, in which may very plainly be discovered the dawn or twilight of *Paradise Lost*. Milton appears to have formed very early that system of diction, and mode of verse, which his maturer judgment approved, and from which he never endeavoured nor desired to deviate.

Nor does *Comus* afford only a specimen of his language; it exhibits likewise his power of description and his vigour of sentiment, employed in the praise and defence of virtue. A work more truly poetical is rarely found; allusions, images, and descriptive epithets, embellish almost every period with lavish decoration. As a series of lines, therefore, it may be considered as worthy of all the admiration with which the votaries have received it.

As a drama it is deficient. The action is not probable. A Masque, in those parts where super-

natural intervention is admitted, must indeed be given up to all the freaks of imagination, but, so far as the action is merely human, it ought to be reasonable; which can hardly be said of the conduct of the two brothers, who, when their sister sinks with fatigue in a pathless wilderness, wander both away together in search of berries too far to find their way back, and leave a helpless lady to all the sadness and danger of solitude. This, however, is a defect overbalanced by its convenience.

What deserves more reprehension is, that the prologue spoken in the wild wood by the attendant Spirit is addressed to the audience, a mode of communication so contrary to the nature of dramatick representation, that no precedents can support it.

The discourse of the Spirit is too long; an objection that may be made to almost all the following speeches; they have not the spriteliness of a dialogue animated by reciprocal contention, but seem rather declamations deliberately composed, and formally repeated, on a moral question. The auditor therefore listens as to a lecture, without passion, without anxiety.

The song of Comus has airiness and jollity; but, what may recommend Milton's morals as well as his poetry, the invitations to pleasure are so general, that they excite no distinct images of corrupt enjoyment, and take no dangerous hold on the fancy.

The following soliloquies of Comus and the Lady are elegant, but tedious. The song must owe much to the voice if it ever can delight. At last the Brothers enter, with too much tranquilli-

ty; and, when they have feared lest their sister should be in danger, and hoped that she is not in danger, the Elder makes a speech in praise of chastity, and the Younger finds how fine it is to be a philosopher.

Then descends the Spirit in form of a shepherd; and the Brother, instead of being in haste to ask his help, praises his singing, and inquires his business in that place. It is remarkable, that at this interview the Brother is taken with a short fit of rhyming. The Spirit relates that the Lady is in the power of Comus; the Brother moralizes again; and the Spirit makes a long narration, of no use because it is false, and therefore unsuitable to a good Being.

In all these parts the language is poetical, and the sentiments are generous; but there is something wanting to allure attention.

The dispute between the Lady and Comus is the most animated and affecting scene of the drama, and wants nothing but a brisker reciprocation of objections and replies to invite attention and detain it.

The songs are vigorous and full of imagery; but they are harsh in their diction, and not very musical in their numbers.

Throughout the whole the figures are too bold, and the language too luxuriant, for dialogue. It is a drama in the epick style, elegantly splendid, and tediously instructive.

The *Sonnets* were written in different parts of Milton's life, upon different occasions. They deserve not any particular criticism; for of the best it can only be said, that they are not bad; and

perhaps only the eighth and the twenty-first are truly entitled to this slender commendation. The fabrick of a sonnet, however adapted to the Italian language, has never succeeded in ours, which, having greater variety of termination, requires the rhymes to be often changed.

Those little pieces may be dispatched without much anxiety; a greater work calls for greater care. I am now to examine *Paradise Lost;* a poem, which, considered with respect to design, may claim the first place, and with respect to performance, the second, among the productions of the human mind.

By the general consent of criticks, the first praise of genius is due to the writer of an epick poem, as it requires an assemblage of all the powers which are singly sufficient for other compositions. Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling imagination to the help of reason. Epick poetry undertakes to teach the most important truths by the most pleasing precepts, and therefore relates some great event in the most affecting manner. History must supply the writer with the rudiments of narration, which he must improve and exalt by a nobler art, must animate by dramatick energy, and diversify by retrospection and anticipation; morality must teach him the exact bounds, and different shades, of vice and virtue; from policy, and the practice of life, he has to learn the discriminations of character, and the tendency of the passions, either single or combined; and physiology must supply him with illustrations and images. To put these materials to poetical use, is required an imagination capable

of painting nature, and realizing fiction. Nor is he yet a poet till he has attained the whole extension of his language, distinguished all the delicacies of phrase, and all the colours of words, and learned to adjust their different sounds to all the varieties of metrical modulation.

Bossu is of opinion, that the poet's first work is to find a *moral*, which his fable is afterwards to illustrate and establish. This seems to have been the process only of Milton; the moral of other poems is incidental and consequent; in Milton's only it is essential and intrinsick. His purpose was the most useful and the most arduous; *to vindicate the ways of God to man;* to shew the reasonableness of religion, and the necessity of obedience to the Divine Law.

To convey this moral, there must be a *fable*, a narration artfully constructed, so as to excite curiosity, and surprize expectation. In this part of his work, Milton must be confessed to have equalled every other poet. He has involved in his account of the Fall of Man the events which preceded, and those that were to follow it: he has interwoven the whole system of theology with such propriety, that every part appears to be necessary; and scarcely any recital is wished shorter for the sake of quickening the progress of the main action.

The subject of an epick poem is naturally an event of great importance. That of Milton is not the destruction of a city, the conduct of a colony, or the foundation of an empire. His subject is the fate of worlds, the revolutions of Heaven and of Earth; rebellion, against the supreme

King, raised by the highest order of created beings; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures; their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace.

Great events can be hastened or retarded only by persons of elevated dignity. Before the greatness displayed in Milton's poem, all other greatness shrinks away. The weakest of his agents are the highest and noblest of human beings, the original parents of mankind; with whose actions the elements consented; on whose rectitude, or deviation of will, depended the state of terrestrial nature, and the condition of all the future inhabitants of the globe.

Of the other agents in the poem, the chief are such as it is irreverence to name on slight occasions. The rest were lower powers;

> ——— of which the least could wield
> Those elements, and arm him with the force
> Of all their regions;

powers, which only the controul of Omnipotence restrains from laying creation waste, and filling the vast expanse of space with ruin and confusion. To display the motives and actions of beings thus superior, so far as human reason can examine them, or human imagination represent them, is the task which this mighty poet has undertaken and performed.

In the examination of epick poems much speculation is commonly employed upon the *characters*. The characters in the *Paradise Lost*, which admit

of examination, are those of angels and of man; of angels good and evil; of man in his innocent and sinful state.

Among the angels, the virtue of Raphael is mild and placid, of easy condescension and free communication; that of Michael is regal and lofty, and, as may seem, attentive to the dignity of his own nature. Abdiel and Gabriel appear occasionally, and act as every incident requires; the solitary fidelity of Abdiel is very amiably painted.

Of the evil angels the characters are more diversified. To Satan, as Addison observes, such sentiments are given as suit *the most exalted and most depraved being*. Milton has been censured by Clarke*, for the impiety which sometimes breaks from Satan's mouth; for there are thoughts, as he justly remarks, which no observation of character can justify, because no good man would willingly permit them to pass, however transiently, through his own mind. To make Satan speak as a rebel, without any such expressions as might taint the reader's imagination, was indeed one of the great difficulties in Milton's undertaking; and I cannot but think that he has extricated himself with great happiness. There is in Satan's speeches little that can give pain to a pious ear. The language of rebellion cannot be the same with that of obedience. The malignity of Satan foams in haughtiness and obstinacy; but his expressions are commonly general, and no otherwise offensive than as they are wicked.

The other chiefs of the celestial rebellion are

* Author of the Essay on Study.

very judiciously discriminated in the first and second books; and the ferocious character of Moloch appears, both in the battle and the council, with exact consistency.

To Adam and to Eve are given, during their innocence, such sentiments as innocence can generate and utter. Their love is pure benevolence and mutual veneration; their repasts are without luxury, and their diligence without toil. Their addresses to their Maker have little more than the voice of admiration and gratitude. Fruition left them nothing to ask, and Innocence left them nothing to fear.

But with guilt enter distrust and discord, mutual accusation, and stubborn self-defence; they regard each other with alienated minds, and dread their Creator as the avenger of their transgression. At last they seek shelter in his mercy, soften to repentance, and melt in supplication. Both before and after the Fall, the superiority of Adam is diligently sustained.

Of the *probable* and the *marvellous*, two parts of a vulgar epick poem, which immerge the critick in deep consideration, the *Paradise Lost* requires little to be said. It contains the history of a miracle, of Creation and Redemption; it displays the power and the mercy of the Supreme Being; the probable, therefore, is marvellous, and the marvellous is probable. The substance of the narrative is truth; and, as truth allows no choice, it is, like necessity, superior to rule. To the accidental or adventitious parts, as to every thing human, some slight exceptions may be made; but the main fabrick is immoveably supported.

It is justly remarked by Addison, that this poem has, by the nature of its subject, the advantage above all others, that it is universally and perpetually interesting. All mankind will, through all ages, bear the same relation to Adam and to Eve, and must partake of that good and evil which extend to themselves.

Of the *Machinery*, so called from Θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, by which is meant the occasional interposition of supernatural power, another fertile topick of critical remarks, here is no room to speak, because every thing is done under the immediate and visible direction of Heaven; but the rule is so far observed, that no part of the action could have been accomplished by any other means.

Of *episodes*, I think there are only two, contained in Raphael's relation of the war in Heaven, and Michael's prophetick account of the changes to happen in this world. Both are closely connected with the great action; one was necessary to Adam as a warning, the other as a consolation.

To the completeness or *integrity* of the design nothing can be objected; it has distinctly and clearly what Aristotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is perhaps no poem, of the same length, from which so little can be taken without apparent mutilation. Here are no funeral games, nor is there any long description of a shield. The short digressions at the beginning of the third, seventh, and ninth books, might doubtless be spared; but superfluities so beautiful, who would take away? or who does not wish that the author of the *Iliad* had gratified succeeding ages with a little knowledge of himself? Perhaps

no passages are more frequently or more attentively read than those extrinsick paragraphs; and, since the end of poetry is pleasure, that cannot be unpoetical with which all are pleased.

The questions, whether the action of the poem be strictly *one*, whether the poem can be properly termed *heroick*, and who is the hero, are raised by such readers as draw their principles of judgment rather from books than from reason Milton, though he intituled *Paradise Lost* only a *poem*, yet calls it himself *heroick song*. Dryden petulantly and indecently denies the heroism of Adam, because he was overcome; but there is no reason why the hero should not be unfortunate, except established practice, since success and virtue do not go necessarily together. Cato is the hero of Lucan; but Lucan's authority will not be suffered by Quintilian to decide. However, if success be necessary, Adam's deceiver was at last crushed: Adam was restored to his Maker's favour, and therefore may securely resume his human rank.

After the scheme and fabrick of the poem, must be considered its component parts, the sentiments and the diction.

The *sentiments*, as expressive of manners or appropriated to characters, are, for the greater part, unexceptionably just.

Splendid passages, containing lessons of morality, or precepts of prudence, occur seldom. Such is the original formation of this poem, that, as it admits no human manners till the Fall, it can give little assistance to human conduct. Its end is to raise the thoughts above sublunary cares or plea-

sures. Yet the praise of that fortitude, with which Abdiel maintained his singularity of virtue against the scorn of multitudes, may be accommodated to all times; and Raphael's reproof of Adam's curiosity after the planetary motions, with the answer returned by Adam, may be confidently opposed to any rule of life which any poet has delivered.

The thoughts which are occasionally called forth in the progress, are such as could only be produced by an imagination in the highest degree fervid and active, to which materials were supplied by incessant study and unlimited curiosity. The heat of Milton's mind may be said to sublimate his learning, to throw off into his work the spirit of science, unmingled with its grosser parts

He had considered creation in its whole extent, and his descriptions are therefore learned. He had accustomed his imagination to unrestrained indulgence, and his conceptions therefore were extensive. The characteristick quality of his poem is sublimity. He sometimes descends to the elegant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace; but his natural port is gigantick loftiness *. He can please when pleasure is required; but it is his peculiar power to astonish.

He seems to have been well acquainted with his own genius, and to know what it was that Nature had bestowed upon him more bountifully than upon others; the power of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful; he

* Algarotti terms it *gigantesca sublimità Miltoniana.*

therefore chose a subject on which too much could not be said, on which he might tire his fancy without the censure of extravagance.

The appearances of nature, and the occurrences of life, did not satiate his appetite of greatness. To paint things as they are, requires a minute attention, and employs the memory rather than the fancy. Milton's delight was to sport in the wide regions of possibility; reality was a scene too narrow for his mind. He sent his faculties out upon discovery, into worlds where only imagination can travel, and delighted to form new modes of existence, and furnish sentiment and action to superior beings, to trace the counsels of Hell, or accompany the choirs of Heaven.

But he could not be always in other worlds; he must sometimes revisit earth, and tell of things visible and known. When he cannot raise wonder by the sublimity of his mind, he gives delight by its fertility.

Whatever be his subject, he never fails to fill the imagination. But his images and descriptions of the scenes or operations of Nature do not seem to be always copied from original form, nor to have the freshness, raciness, and energy, of immediate observation. He saw Nature, as Dryden expresses it, *through the spectacles of books*; and on most occasions calls learning to his assistance. The garden of Eden brings to his mind the vale of *Enna*, where Proserpine was gathering flowers. Satan makes his way through fighting elements, like *Argo* between the *Cyanean* rocks; or *Ulysses* between the two *Sicilian* whirlpools, when he shunned *Cha-*

rybdis on the *larboard.* The mythological allusions have been justly censured, as not being always used with notice of their vanity; but they contribute variety to the narration, and produce an alternate exercise of the memory and the fancy.

His similies are less numerous and more various, than those of his prdecessors. But he does not confine himself within the limits of rigorous comparison: his great excellence is amplitude; and he expands the adventitious image beyond the dimensions which the occasion required. Thus comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the Moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope, and all the wonders which the telescope discovers.

Of his moral sentiments it is hardly praise to affirm that they excel those of all other poets; for this superiority he was indebted to his acquaintance with the sacred writings. The ancient epick poets, wanting the light of Revelation, were very unskilful teachers of virtue; their principal characters may be great, but they are not amiable. The reader may rise from their works with a greater degree of active or passive fortitude, and sometimes of prudence; but he will be able to carry away few precepts of justice, and none of mercy.

From the Italian writers it appears, that the advantages of even Christian knowledge may be possessed in vain. Ariosto's pravity is generally known; and, though the *Deliverance of Jerusalem* may be considered as a sacred subject, the poet has been very sparing of moral instruction.

In Milton every line breathes sanctity of thought, and purity of manners, except when the train of the narration requires the introduction of the rebellious spirits; and even they are compelled to acknowledge their subjection to God, in such a manner as excites reverence and confirms piety.

Of human beings there are but two; but those two are the parents of mankind, venerable before their fall for dignity and innocence, and amiable after it for repentance and submission. In the first state their affection is tender without weakness, and their piety sublime without presumption. When they have sinned, they shew how discord begins in mutual frailty, and how it ought to cease in mutual forbearance; how confidence of the divine favour is forfeited by sin, and how hope of pardon may be obtained by penitence and prayer. A state of innocence we can only conceive, if indeed, in our present misery, it be possible to conceive it; but the sentiments and worship proper to a fallen and offending Being, we have all to learn, as we have all to practise.

The poet, whatever be done, is always great. Our progenitors in their first state conversed with angels; even when folly and sin had degraded them, they had not in their humiliation *the port of mean suitors;* and they rise again to reverential regard, when we find that their prayers were heard.

As human passions did not enter the world before the Fall, there is in the *Paradise Lost* little opportunity for the pathetick; but what little there is has not been lost. That passion which

is peculiar to rational nature, the anguish arising from the consciousness of transgression, and the horrors attending the sense of the Divine Displeasure, are very justly described and forcibly impressed. But the passions are moved only on one occasion; sublimity is the general and prevailing quality of this poem; sublimity variously modified, sometimes descriptive, sometimes argumentative.

The defects and faults of *Paradise Lost*, for faults and defects every work of man must have, it is the business of impartial criticism to discover. As, in displaying the excellence of Milton, I have not made long quotations, because of selecting beauties there had been no end, I shall in the same general manner mention that which seems to deserve censure; for what Englishman can take delight in transcribing passages, which, if they lessen the reputation of Milton, diminish in some degree the honour of our country?

The generality of my scheme does not admit the frequent notice of verbal inaccuracies; which Bentley, perhaps better skilled in grammar than in poetry, has often found, though he sometimes made them, and which he imputed to the obtrusions of a reviser, whom the author's blindness obliged him to employ; a supposition rash and groundless, if he thought it true; and vile and pernicious, if, as is said, he in private allowed it to be false.

The plan of *Paradise Lost* has this inconvenience, that it comprises neither human actions nor human manners. The man and woman who act and suffer are in a state which no other man or wo-

man can ever know. The reader finds no transaction in which he can be engaged; beholds no condition in which he can by any effort of imagination place himself; he has, therefore, little natural curiosity or sympathy.

We all, indeed, feel the effects of Adam's disobedience; we all sin like Adam, and like him must all bewail our offences; we have restless and insidious enemies in the fallen angels; and in the blessed spirits we have guardians and friends; in the Redemption of mankind we hope to be included; and in the description, of Heaven and Hell we are surely interested, as we are all to reside hereafter either in the regions of horror or of bliss.

But these truths are too important to be new; they have been taught to our infancy; they have mingled with our solitary thoughts and familiar conversations, and are habitually interwoven with the whole texture of life. Being therefore not new, they raise no unaccustomed emotion in the mind; what we knew before, we cannot learn; what is not unexpected, cannot surprise.

Of the ideas suggested by these awful scenes, from some we recede with reverence, except when stated hours require their association; and from others we shrink with horror, or admit them only as salutary inflictions, as counterpoises to our interests and passions. Such images rather obstruct the career of fancy than incite it.

Pleasure and terror are indeed the genuine sources of poetry; but poetical pleasure must be such as human imagination can at least conceive; and poetical terror such as human strength and for-

titude may combat. The good and evil of Eternity are too ponderous for the wings of wit; the mind sinks under them in passive helplessness, content with calm belief and humble adoration.

Known truths, however, may take a different appearance, and be conveyed to the mind by a new train of intermediate images. This Milton has undertaken, and performed with pregnancy and vigour of mind peculiar to himself. Whoever considers the few radical positions which the Scriptures afforded him, will wonder by what energetic operation he expanded them to such extent, and ramified them to so much variety, restrained as he was by religious reverence from licentiousness of fiction.

Here is a full display of the united force of study and genius; of a great accumulation of materials, with judgment to digest, and fancy to combine them: Milton was able to select from nature, or from story, from ancient fable, or from modern science, whatever could illustrate or adorn his thoughts. An accumulation of knowledge impregnated his mind, fermented by study, and exalted by imagination.

It has been therefore said, without an indecent hyperbole, by one of his encomiasts, that in reading *Paradise Lost* we read a book of universal knowledge.

But original deficience cannot be supplied. The want of human interest is always felt. *Paradise Lost* is one of the books which the reader admires and lays down, and forgets to take up again. None ever wished it longer than it is. Its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure. We read Milton

for instruction, retire harrassed and overburdened, and look elsewhere for recreation; we desert our master, and seek for companions.

Another inconvenience of Milton's design is, that it requires the description of what cannot be described, the agency of spirits. He saw that immateriality supplied no images, and that he could not shew angels acting but by instruments of action; he therefore invested them with form and matter. This, being necessary, was therefore defensible; and he should have secured the consistency of his system, by keeping immateriality out of sight, and enticing his reader to drop it from his thoughts. But he has unhappily perplexed his poetry with his philosophy. His infernal and celestial powers are sometimes pure spirit, and sometimes animated body. When Satan walks with his lance upon the *burning marl*, he has a body; when, in his passage between Hell and the new world, he is in danger of sinking in the vacuity, and is supported by a gust of rising vapours, he has a body; when he animates the toad, he seems to be mere spirit, that can penetrate matter at pleasure; when he *starts up in his own shape*, he has at least a determined form; and, when he is brought before Gabriel, he has *a spear and a shield*, which he had the power of hiding in the toad, though the arms of the contending angels are evidently material.

The vulgar inhabitants of Pandæmonium, being *incorporeal spirits*, are *at large, though without number*, in a limited space: yet in the battle, when they were overwhelmed by mountains, their ar-

mour hurt them, *crushed in upon their substance, now grown gross by sinning.* This likewise happened to the uncorrupted angels, who were overthrown the *sooner for their arms, for unarmed they might easily, as spirits, have evaded by contraction or remove.* Even as spirits they are hardly spiritual; for *contraction* and *remove* are images of matter; but if they could have escaped without their armour, they might have escaped from it, and left only the empty cover to be battered. Uriel, when he rides on a sun-beam, is material; Satan is material when he is afraid of the prowess of Adam.

The confusion of spirit and matter, which pervades the whole narration of the war of Heaven, fills it with incongruity; and the book in which it is related is, I believe, the favourite of children, and gradually neglected as knowledge is increased.

After the operation of immaterial agents which cannot be explained, may be considered that of allegorical persons which have no real existence. To exalt causes into agents, to invest abstract ideas with form, and animate them with activity, has always been the right of poetry. But such airy beings are, for the most part, suffered only to do their natural office, and retire. Thus Fame tells a tale, and Victory hovers over a general, or perches on a standard; but Fame and Victory can do no more. To give them any real employment, or ascribe to them any material agency, is to make them allegorical no longer, but to shock the mind by ascribing effects to non-entity. In the *Prometheus* of Eschylus, we see *Violence* and *Strength*, and in the *Alcestis* of Euripides, we see *Death*, brought upon

the stage, all as active persons of the drama; but no precedents can justify absurdity.

Milton's allegory of Sin and Death is undoubtedly faulty. Sin is indeed the mother of Death, and may be allowed to be the portress of Hell; but when they stop the journey of Satan, a journey described as real, and when Death offers him battle, the allegory is broken. That Sin and Death should have shewn the way to Hell, might have been allowed; but they cannot facilitate the passage by building a bridge, because the difficulty of Satan's passage is described as real and sensible, and the bridge ought to be only figurative. The Hell assigned to the rebellious spirits is described as not less local than the residence of man. It is placed in some distant part of space, separated from the regions of harmony and order by a chaotick waste and unoccupied vacuity; but *Sin* and *Death* worked up a *mole* of *aggravated soil*, cemented with *asphaltus;* a work too bulky for ideal architects.

This unskilful allegory appears to me one of the greatest faults of the poem; and to this there was no temptation but the author's opinion of its beauty.

To the conduct of the narrative some objections may be made. Satan is with great expectation brought before Gabriel in Paradise, and is suffered to go away unmolested. The Creation of man is represented as the consequence of the vacuity left in Heaven by the expulsion of the rebels; yet Satan mentions it as a report *rife in Heaven* before his departure.

To find sentiments for the state of innocence was very difficult; and something of anticipation perhaps is now and then discovered. Adam's discourse of dreams seems not to be the speculation of a new-created being. I know not whether his answer to the angel's reproof for curiosity does not want something of propriety; it is the speech of a man acquainted with many other men. Some philosophical notions, especially when the philosophy is false, might have been better omitted. The angel, in a comparison, speaks of *timorous deer*, before deer were yet timorous, and before Adam could understand the comparison.

Dryden remarks, that Milton has some flats among his elevations. This is only to say, that all the parts are not equal. In every work, one part must be for the sake of others; a palace must have passages; a poem must have transitions. It is no more to be required that wit should always be blazing, than that the sun should always stand at noon. In a great work there is a vicissitude of luminous and opaque parts, as there is in the world a succession of day and night. Milton, when he has expatiated in the sky, may be allowed sometimes to revisit earth; for what other author ever soared so high, or sustained his flight so long?

Milton, being well versed in the Italian poets, appears to have borrowed often from them; and, as every man catches something from his companions, his desire of imitating Ariosto's levity has disgraced his work with the *Paradise of Fools*; a fiction not in itself ill-imagined, but too ludicrous for its place.

His play on words, in which he delights too often; his equivocations, which Bentley endeavours to defend by the example of the ancients; his unnecessary and ungraceful use of terms of art; it is not necessary to mention, because they are easily remarked, and generally censured; and at last bear so little proportion to the whole, that they scarcely deserve the attention of a critick.

Such are the faults of that wonderful performance, *Paradise Lost*; which he who can put in balance with its beauties must be considered not as nice but as dull, as less to be censured for want of candour, than pitied for want of sensibility.

Of *Paradise Regained*, the general judgment seems now to be right, that it is in many parts elegant, and every where instructive. It was not to be supposed that the writer of *Paradise Lost* could ever write without great effusions of fancy, and exalted precepts of wisdom. The basis of *Paradise Regained* is narrow; a dialogue without action can never please like an union of the narrative and dramatick powers. Had this poem been written not by Milton, but by some imitator, it would have claimed and received universal praise.

If *Paradise Regained* has been too much depreciated, *Sampson Agonistes* has in requital been too much admired. It could only be by long prejudice, and the bigotry of learning, that Milton could prefer the ancient tragedies, with their encumbrance of a chorus, to the exhibitions of the French and English stages; and it is only by a blind confidence in the reputation of Milton, that a drama can be praised in which the intermediate

parts have neither cause nor consequence, neither hasten nor retard the catastrophe.

In this tragedy are however many particular beauties, many just sentiments and striking lines; but it wants that power of attracting the attention which a well-connected plan produces.

Milton would not have excelled in dramatick writing; he knew human nature only in the gross, and had never studied the shades of character, nor the combinations of concurring, or the perplexity of contending passions. He had read much, and knew what books could teach; but had mingled little in the world, and was deficient in the knowledge which experience must confer.

Through all his greater works their prevails an uniform peculiarity of *Diction*, a mode and cast of expression which bears little resemblance to that of any former writer; and which is so far removed from common use, that an unlearned reader, when he first opens his book, finds himself surprised by a new language.

This novelty has been, by those who can find nothing wrong in Milton, imputed to his laborious endeavours after words suitable to the grandeur of his ideas. *Our language*, says Addison, *sunk under him.* But the truth is, that, both in prose and verse, he had formed his style by a perverse and pedantick principle. He was desirous to use English words with a foreign idiom. This in all his prose is discovered and condemned; for there judgment operates freely, neither softened by the beauty, nor awed by the dignity of his thoughts; but such is the power of his poetry, that his call is

obeyed without resistance, the reader feels himself in captivity to a higher and nobler mind, and criticism sinks in admiration.

Milton's style was not modified by his subject; what is shewn with greater extent in *Paradise Lost*, may be found in *Comus*. One source of his peculiarity was his familiarity with the Tuscan poets: the disposition of his words is, I think, frequently Italian; perhaps sometimes combined with other tongues. Of him, at last, may be said what Jonson says of Spenser, that *he wrote no language*, but has formed what Butler calls a *Babylonish Dialect*, in itself harsh and barbarous, but made by exalted genius and extensive learning the vehicle of so much instruction and so much pleasure, that, like other lovers, we find grace in its deformity.

Whatever be the faults of his diction, he cannot want the praise of copiousness and variety: he was master of his language in its full extent; and has selected the melodious words with such diligence, that from his book alone the Art of English Poetry might be learned.

After his diction, something must be said of his *versification*. *The measure*, he says, *is the English heroick verse without rhyme*. Of this mode he had many examples among the Italians, and some in his own country. The Earl of Surrey is said to have translated one of Virgil's books without rhyme; and beside our tragedies, a few short poems had appeared in blank-verse, particularly one tending to reconcile the nation to Raleigh's wild attempt upon Guiana, and probably written by Raleigh himself. These petty performances can-

not be supposed to have much influenced Milton, who more probably took his hint from Trissino's *Italia Liberata;* and, finding blank verse easier than rhyme, was desirous of persuading himself that it is better.

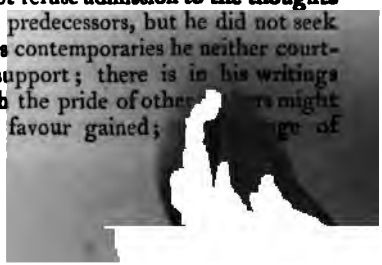
Rhyme, he says, and says truly, *is no necessary adjunct of true poetry*. But, perhaps, of poetry, as a mental operation, metre or musick is no necessary adjunct: it is however by the musick of metre that poetry has been discriminated in all languages; and, in languages melodiously constructed with a due proportion of long and short syllables, metre is sufficient. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another; where metre is scanty and imperfect, some help is necessary. The musick of the English heroick lines strikes the ear so faintly, that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together; this co-operation can be only obtained by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another as a distinct system of sounds; and this distinctness is obtained and preserved by the artifice of rhyme. The variety of pauses, so much boasted by the lovers of blank verse, changes the measures of an English poet to the periods of a declaimer; and there are only a few skilful and happy readers of Milton, who enable their audience to perceive where the lines end or begin. *Blank verse*, said an ingenious critick, *seems to be veres only to the eye.*

Poetry may subsist without rhyme, but English poetry will not often please; nor can rhyme ever be safely spared but where the subject is able to support itself. Blank verse makes some approach to

that which is called the *lapidary style;* has neither the easiness of prose, nor the melody of numbers, and therefore tires by long continuance. Of the Italian writers without rhyme, whom Milton alledges as precedents, not one is popular; what reason could urge in its defence has been confuted by the ear.

But, whatever be the advantages of rhyme, I cannot prevail on myself to wish that Milton had been a rhymer; for I cannot wish his work to be other than it is; yet like other heroes, he is to be admired rather than imitated. He that thinks himself capable of astonishing may write blank verse; but those that hope only to please must condescend to rhyme.

The highest praise of genius is original invention. Milton cannot be said to have contrived the structure of an epick poem, and therefore owes reverence to that vigour and amplitude of mind to which all generations must be indebted for the art of poetical narration, for the texture of the fable, the variation of incidents, the interposition of dialogue, and all the stratagems that surprize and enchain attention. But, of all the borrowers from Homer, Milton is perhaps the least indebted. He was naturally a thinker for himself, confident of his own abilities, and disdainful of help or hindrance: he did not refuse admission to the thoughts or images of his predecessors, but he did not seek them. From his contemporaries he neither courted nor received support; there is in his writings nothing by which the pride of others might be gratified, or favour gained;



praise, nor solicitation of support. His great works were performed under discountenance, and in blindness; but difficulties vanished at his touch; he was born for whatever is arduous; and his work is not the greatest of heroick poems, only because it is not the first.

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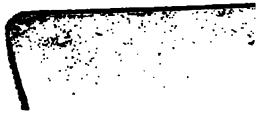
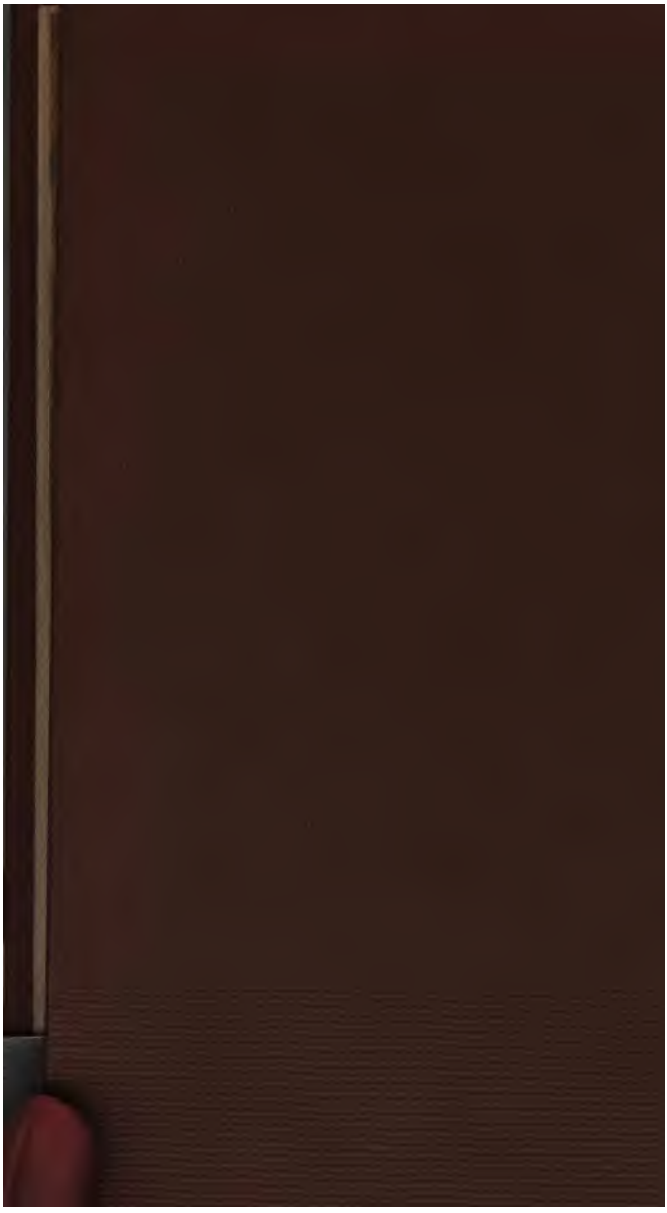
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